

# IMPACT REPORT 2025



How we  
helped





## About the Queen's Institute of Community Nursing

The Queen's Institute of Community Nursing is a charity dedicated to improving nursing care for people at home and in the community.

Every year, millions of people of all ages need professional nursing care, in or close to home. People today live longer, often with complex health conditions, and they are discharged from hospital more quickly. Those patients can make a better recovery, and can avoid unnecessary hospital re-admissions, if they have the support of skilled community nurses.

We work with nurses, managers and policy makers to make sure that high quality nursing is available for everyone in their homes and communities.

Our aim is to ensure that people receive high quality care when and where they need it, from the right nurse, with the right skills.



## Foreword from the QICN's Chief Executive Steph Lawrence MBE



It is my pleasure to introduce the 2025 Impact Report for The Queen's Institute of Community Nursing (QICN).

Since joining as Chief Executive six months ago, I have been inspired by the dedication, skill, and compassion of community nurses across the UK.

This year has been transformative. Our rebrand to QICN reflects both our heritage and our ambition to champion community nursing, making clear the vital role these nurses play in supporting people in their own communities. We have expanded our specialist faculties, creating professional homes for areas such as mental health, learning disability, and adult social care nursing. These faculties foster connection, influence, and professional growth, helping to strengthen the profession nationally.

Our annual conference, Leading Equitable Care 2025, highlighted the expertise and leadership of nurses in shaping a fairer, more effective health system. Hundreds of nurses were also recognised as Queen's Nurses, exemplifying excellence in practice and lifelong learning.

None of these achievements would be possible without the support of our funders and partners. Contributions from organisations such as the National Garden Scheme enable innovation scholarships and community projects that improve health and wellbeing for many.

As you explore this report, I hope you will see not just the activities and statistics, but the story of community nursing's impact- shaped by nurses' insight, courage, and compassion, and by every individual and organisation committed to making high-quality community care a reality.

Thank you for your interest and support.

Steph Lawrence MBE QN

Chief Executive, The Queen's Institute of Community Nursing



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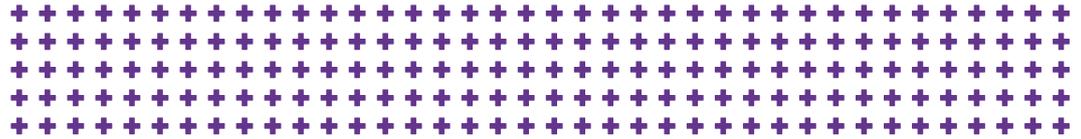
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## 2025 - Highlights



1. Steph Lawrence MBE, QICN Chief Exec at the launch of the Adult Social Care Nursing Faculty; 2. Community Children's Nursing Lead and QN, Rebecca Daniels, during her #12in12 fundraising challenge; 3. New Queen's Nurse, Caroline Anne Donaldson, receiving her certificate from Karen Bonner MBE, Chief Nurse, at the Awards Ceremony. 4. Dr Amanda Young, QICN's Director of Nursing Programmes visiting an Elsie Wagg project, 'The Circle Garden Haven'; 5. Elsie Wagg Scholarship project lead, Kendra Schneller MBE's project, 'Garden to Plate'; 6. Dame Elizabeth Anionwu officially opening the Dame Elizabeth Anionwu Centre for Professional Development; 7. Professor Olga Yakusheva giving the lecture at the William Rathbone X Annual Award; 8. Launch of the Mental Health Nursing and Learning Disability Nursing Faculties; 9. Former MP Ann Keen leading the Organisational Membership's Political Influencing Experience; 10. Former Chief Exec, Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, announcing the QICN's new name and logo at the online QN Annual Meeting; 11. Leading Strategically programme exercise; 12. Chair of Council, Professor John Unsworth OBE, receiving Fellowship from the RCN.



## Queen's Nurses programme

The Queen's Nurse programme brings together community nurses to develop their professional skills and deliver outstanding patient care in the community.

The title of Queen's Nurse (QN) is available to individual nurses who have demonstrated a high level of commitment to patient care and nursing practice. All nurses and health visitors with five years' experience working in the community are eligible to apply.

There are currently over 3300 Queen's Nurses in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and Isle of Man.



“ The title of Queen's Nurse has a history and a value. The original Queen's Nurses were the best trained nurses of their day. They held a special place in their communities. By their practice and their conduct, they represented not only nursing as a profession, but the reputation of the QICN. They carried forward the aims and ideals of community nursing, that William Rathbone and Florence Nightingale had developed together; ideals that the Institute was, and is still today, committed to uphold.

So, the Queen's Nurse title is to be given and received with honour and dignity. It is not an end in itself, but the beginning of a process of practice improvement, leadership and growth. And, most importantly, it requires action from Queen's Nurses – to benefit patients, residents, clients, their families and carers – and to enhance the profession.

Steph Lawrence MBE, QICN Chief Executive

New Queen's Nurse Tracey Vawn Adewunmi at the QICN's Award Ceremony in December 2025.



The Queen's Nurse Annual Meeting 2025 took place on 13 March. A meeting solely for QNs, the theme of the day-long conference was, 'Looking into the Future' and was attended by nearly 600 Queen's Nurses.

Speakers at the Queen's Nurse Annual Meeting included Professor Dame Anionwu OM; Professor John Unsworth; QN Lisa Oluyinka; Dr Barbara Stilwell FRCN; QN Shonna Spreadbury; George Plumptre; Dr Crystal Oldman CBE.

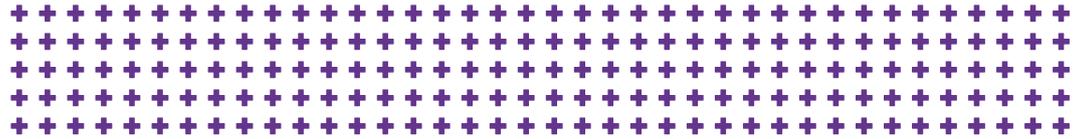
510 new Queen's Nurses received their Queen's Nurse badge and certificate at the Awards Ceremony in London in 2025. This brings the number of QNs to over 3300.

“ Thank you for a wonderful day – this is my first AGM as a new QN and it has been extremely inspirational. What a privilege it is to be a nurse and part of the QICN.  
Queen's Nurse feedback from the Queen's Nurse Annual Meeting

“ Thank you to you all for a fantastic and awe inspiring day!!!!  
Queen's Nurse feedback from the Queen's Nurse Annual Meeting

“ I can not put in to words how I am feeling right now, thank you I am so proud to be a QN  
Queen's Nurse feedback from the Queen's Nurse Annual Meeting





## Homeless and Inclusion Health programme

The QICN supports community nurses to achieve outstanding levels of care for people experiencing homelessness and under-served communities.

The aim of the Homeless & Inclusion Health Network is to provide support, networking and learning opportunities to nurses, Health Visitors, midwives, AHPs and other professionals working with marginalised populations such as those experiencing homelessness, refugees, asylum seekers, sex workers and people from the Gypsy, Roma & Traveller communities.

It is recognised that roles in this area are often unique and autonomous so there is a lot of lone-working. Feedback shows that people seek others who are also working in similar environments with similar challenges.



.....  
// Thank you so much for raising the profile and impact of homelessness. I started working as a health visitor with homeless families 10yrs ago and it was a very lonely place. I am passionate about raising the profile with students.  
HIH Network Member feedback

.....  
// Many thanks - both those presentations were really thought provoking and inspiring. Gave me a lot of ideas.  
HIH Network Member feedback



The HIH Network now has over 2,700 members.

Health Inequity was confirmed to be an issue across all fields of health and social care, and varied specialists gave webinars including dentists, youth charities, and palliative care amongst others.

Themes of innovation, challenging norms, advocating and persistence underline a lot of the work done in this area. Whether it was hearing about a multi-disciplinary mental health service in Manchester, a one-of-a-kind care home for palliative care patients with addictions, or a new remote service improving access to blood pressure management.

Staff and members also looked at pouring into their own cups as practitioners too. A mindfulness session was given by Kareen, who highlighted the importance of safe spaces for regular discussion about the moral injuries and injustices encountered in this line of work.

Beyond regular meetings and a monthly newsletter, the network raises awareness of roles in the field through interview articles offering ideas and inspiration. The QICN's HIH Network Lead also presented at two RCN conferences and the BJN's first conference this year, promoting awareness of health inequity and the impact nurses can have.

// My first meeting today, really interesting and useful presentations, thank you.  
HIH Network Member feedback

// Great presentations thank you and very helpful to consider going forward.  
HIH Network Member feedback

// There is so much to think about with your excellent presentation.  
HIH Network Member feedback





## Adult Social Care Nurse Network

The Adult Social Care Nursing Faculty was launched in July 2025. It is a platform to share leadership, research, and innovation across the Adult Social Care Nursing sector.

Previously there were two networks relating to adult social care: The Care Home Nurses Network, and the IPC Network; these have now merged into the Adult Social Care Nursing Network and continues to be funded by Skills for Care.

The Adult Social Care Nursing Network is free and is open to all adult social care nurses working across the UK. It provides the following:

- Hosts quarterly virtual events that focus on matters relating to the adult social care sector.
- Disseminates regular communications via a newsletter.
- Enables the dissemination of best practice across the adult social care sector and encourage sharing of best practice through the webinars and the closed Facebook Forum.
- Encourages the network members to participate in policy and research.



“ This network recognises and promotes the expertise and leadership of adult social care nurses who deliver care in diverse and often challenging environments, developing a new and much-needed platform to influence policy, research, and innovation in care.

Dr Agnes Fanning, Adult Social Care Nurses Network Lead



ASCNN hosted 3 online meetings in 2025: research in adult social care with Dr Zena Aldridge (NIHR) and Stuart Wright (Brunelcare); vaccines for adults with Helen Donovan QN; community nursing research and wound care with Dr Ben Bowers QN and Susan Knight (University of Hertfordshire)

There are 3,389 current members of the ASCNN.

Two new co-chairs are now volunteering their time to support the network and ensure the online meetings reflect the latest research, best practice, innovation, and policy in adult social care: Teresa Chinn MBE RN QN and Melanie Furness BEM MSc RGN QN.

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**//** As always, a very informative session, thank you.  
Adult Social Care Nurse Network member feedback from a webinar

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**//** Thank you to all presenters, very interesting.  
Adult Social Care Nurse Network member feedback from a webinar

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**//** Insightful discussion - I have learnt a lot.  
Adult Social Care Nurse Network member feedback from a webinar

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**//** Informative and empowering.  
Adult Social Care Nurse Network member feedback from a webinar



## Long Covid Nurses Network

The Long Covid Nurse Network, led by Queen's Nurse, Helen Donovan, provided an online space for nursing colleagues to connect, learn and support one another, coordinating bimonthly expert-led meetings for shared learning, networking and clinical supervision, with summaries available online.

It produced a bi-monthly newsletter, developed a Community of Practice web resource for nurses working with Long Covid in community and primary care, facilitated peer support across the membership, liaised with related Long Covid groups, and represented nursing within the Community Rehabilitation Alliance.

Due to the cessation of funding in 2025 and a new strategic direction for the charity, the Long Covid Nurses Network closed in November 2025. A summary of the network's achievements for 2025 up to November are available to read on the opposite page.

Meeting summaries and resources remain available on the QICN website; see [www.qicn.org.uk](http://www.qicn.org.uk) for more details.



“ Long Covid and post viral illness presents further challenges and nurses are at the forefront of supporting individuals and communities with this. The QICN Long Covid Nurse network provides a much-needed forum and community of practice to enable this work.

Helen Donovan QN, Long Covid Programme Lead, The QICN



The Long Covid Nurse Group held five events in 2025; topics included, Treatment in Long Covid; Occupational Health and Long Covid; Community Rehabilitation; Oral Health and Nutrition; Menopause and Long Covid.

Over 2025, the network grew to nearly 1000 members.

The membership was primarily nurses working across all areas of health and social care but also included all health care and Allied Health Professional colleagues with an interest

“ Thank you Helen for leading an excellent, informative forum. The quality of the speakers has been very high.  
Feedback from Long Covid Nurse Network member

“ Thank you for running the Long Covid meetings. It has been of great support.  
Feedback from Long Covid Nurse Network member

“ Thank you so much for all the sessions that have been done, they have been fantastic.  
Feedback from Long Covid Nurse Network member





National Networks

## Community Nursing Research Forum

The Community Nursing Research Forum was created in July 2022 and was for community nurses undertaking or considering carrying out research.

Led by Dr Ben Bowers QN, Assistant Professor of Primary Care at the University of Cambridge and an Honorary Nurse Consultant in Palliative Care, the aim of the forum was to strengthen the capacity of community-based nursing research through peer support, mentorship, and supporting personal development and research opportunities.

Due to the cessation of funding in 2025 and a new strategic direction for the charity, the forum closed in November 2025. A summary of the network's achievements for 2025 up to November is available to read on the opposite page.

Meeting summaries and resources remain available on the QICN website; see [www.qicn.org.uk](http://www.qicn.org.uk) for more details.

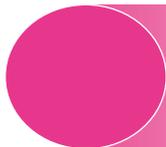


“The Forum played a significant role in supporting the overall aims of the QICN. During its lifetime, it brought together a community of nurses who were inspired by research and motivated to develop their knowledge and skills further. Through this, the Forum helped support nurses to deliver excellent care across a wide range of community settings – this will not be lost as a result of the network having to stop. Research will be a thread through all our other networks.

Steph Lawrence MBE, Chief Executive, The QICN



The forum membership reached 1099 email subscribers.



Two masterclasses were held in 2025: “Critical Appraisal Skills- Making the Most of Evidence”, featuring Dr Simon Etkind, Assistant Professor in Palliative Care, University of Cambridge and “Poster Design Masterclass”, featuring Dr Maria Grant, Freelance trainer and researcher



The forum also ran a Journal Club which reached 52 members.

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**//** This has been incredibly helpful, – some fabulous tips and resources I can signpost to.  
CNRF member masterclass feedback

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**//** Thank you – very interesting & helpful.  
CNRF member masterclass feedback

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**//** Thank you Simon and Ben, great masterclass!  
CNRF member masterclass feedback



National Networks

## Community Children's Nurse Network

The Community Children's Nursing Network (CCNN) was created in 2020 and supports the community children's nursing (CCN) workforce through collaboration and best practice development.

The aims of the CCNN are to raise the profile of community children's nursing workforce and the complex care CCNs deliver every day; to provide a network of support across the UK to CCNs, enabling discussions and opportunity to share questions and experiences; to build best practice and evidence-based guidance, reducing inequality across the UK in service provision; to influence national policy around Babies, Children and Young People (BCYP) with complex health needs in community settings; to raise the Voice of Community Children's Nursing Workforce on behalf of our Babies, Children and Young People.



“ Our mission is to ensure Babies, Children and Young People (BCYP) with complex health needs in the community setting are supported to live their best possible life alongside their peers, with best practice, evidence-based care and a workforce equipped with complex skills required to manage their needs and keep them in the community where ever possible.

Rebecca Daniels BEM, QN, Community Children's Nurse Network Lead



Network members have increased to over to 600, an increase of 16% since last year.

25 meetings were held in 2025 – with external speakers relevant to current practice, or areas raised by members, alongside open space for members to discuss and share any current challenges or where support/advise is required.

Supporting CYP in education settings with SEND – joint with SAPHNA x 5 meetings.  
Attendees 25-35 each meeting.

Presented at many meetings, roundtables and conferences, such as NHS England 2nd CYP Student Nurse conference; Celebrating CYP conference at Northumbria University; UKFHD Specialist Nurse Conference 2025; and many more.

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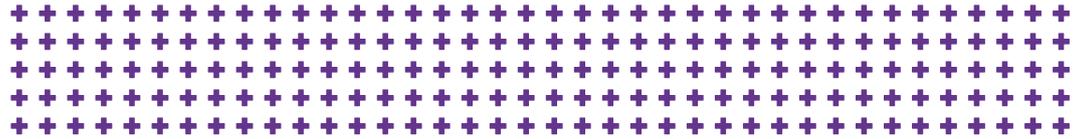
**//** Brilliant meeting content and very thought provoking, thank you so much.  
CCCN member feedback

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**//** Thank you for the opportunity of attending and presenting at one of your network meetings – it was great to be back amongst fellow passionate and committed CCN.  
CCCN member feedback

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**//** Thanks again, great topics and discussions as always.  
CCCN member feedback



## General Practice Nurse Network

The General Practice Nurse network was created in 2024 and is funded by The National Garden Scheme.

The network holds regular webinars and members receive a regular e-newsletter. It is open to all GPNs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The aim of the network is to provide GPNs with the opportunity:

- to be part of a national network for experienced and nurses new to general practice nursing
- to network and share best practice with GPN contemporaries
- to articulate the value of GPNs as autonomous practitioners within the primary care team
  - to discuss innovative approaches to improving and articulating best practice for patients



“ I am delighted to see how this network for General Practice Nurses has developed since its launch in August 2024, providing a valued space to share knowledge, experience and support through the QICN.

The QICN has worked for many years to champion GPNs and raise their profile as a vital part of the primary care workforce, and the network has strengthened that commitment. I look forward to it continuing to reach and connect nurses at all stages of their careers, supporting learning, collaboration and professional development across general practice.

Angie Hack QN, GPN Network Lead



Four webinars were held in 2025 on the following topics: 'Long Term Conditions- A focus on management of Diabetes in Primary Care'; 'Respiratory update in Primary Care'; 'Lymphoedema in Primary Care'; 'Mental Health in Primary Care'.

The GPN Network membership has grown to 1480.

The private Facebook group for GPNs - linked with the network- has grown to 587 members.

The QICN Faculty of General Practice Nursing was launched in June 2025. Its aim is to offer a 'home' for all things focussed on General Practice Nursing and Primary Care education and practice. [Find out more here.](#)

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// Thanks for a brilliant presentation and for highlighting this mental health issue.  
GPN Network webinar feedback

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// Fantastic presentation – thank you so much for your time as I am new to GPN.  
GPN Network webinar feedback

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// Thanks for a brilliant presentation and for highlighting this mental health issue.  
GPN Network webinar feedback





## Association of Academic General Practice Nurse Educators

The Association of Academic General Practice Nurse Educators (AAGPNE) was developed 2018 as an opportunity for academics who lead General Practice Nurse education programmes at Higher Education Institutions in the UK, to come together to form parity and consistency of GPN education and practice across the UK.

The aims of the forum are to:

- Encourage consistency in GPN education and best practice through a collaborative approach to curriculum development and information sharing for GPN education across the UK.
- Raise the profile of GPNs to foster and disseminate excellence in practice.
- Develop and share educational and research expertise to influence policy
  - Respond to government consultations and where appropriate, lobby government agencies.



“ I am delighted to have had the opportunity to Co-Chair the AAGPNE for the past 7 years alongside my colleague Lisa Clarke. This work, and managing the QICN Faculty for General Practice Nurses and the GPN Network and Facebook platform, has enabled me to help raise the unique profile of GPNs, support their education and career choices, and encourage recruitment into General Practice Nursing. A key part of my role has been supporting academic and practice-based colleagues to promote parity and consistency in GPN education and practice.  
Angie Hack QN, Assistant Director of Nursing Programmes (Primary Care), The QICN



The AAGPNE has representatives from across the 4 countries of the UK and includes academic members who run the General Practice Nurse programmes at universities.

Meetings take place on a quarterly basis, usually in March, June, September and December.

Standing speakers provide national updates including the QICN, NHSE, RCN and NMC in addition to speakers for specialist areas of Primary care.

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**//** I just wanted to say thank you for leading the AAGPNE and for all the support you give us, your work is excellent!  
AAGPNE member

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**//** Thank you so much for the opportunity to present at the AAGPNE. It was great to share the good practice and get comments and questions from the group. I loved the meeting and will definitely be a regular attender. It felt great to be part of the bigger picture and listen to our national leads, it joins all the dots! Thank you again.  
AAGPNE member

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**//** Thank you both for a fabulous informative meeting as always and for your efforts in ensuring we are provided with national updates.  
AAGPNE member



Policy Influence &amp; development

## Publications

In 2025, we published a large number of resources, newsletters, reports and guidance for community nurses. All of these resources can be found on our website, [www.qicn.org.uk](http://www.qicn.org.uk).



The QICN published a new impact report for 2024, 'How we helped', illustrating how the charity supported community nurses and the people, families and communities they serve.



The QICN's ICNO published a report, "The Trap Door," highlighting career regression- the overlooked trend of experienced nurses moving into lower-paid or less senior roles. [Read more here.](#)



“ Having worked in this sector for over 10 years, I have seen first-hand the value that nursing brings - not only in direct clinical care, but also in spaces where nurses have not traditionally been present. This includes influencing local policy, leading multi-disciplinary and multi-sector meetings, and shaping education. We would like community nurses to use this guide in whatever way is most useful to them - whether as a reference to look up agencies and articles, or as a workbook to inform their practice and professional development.

Kirit Sehmbi, QICN Homeless and Inclusion Health Project Lead and Clinical Coach



QICN Impact Report 2026  
How We Helped



The QICN's ICNO was commissioned to conduct an independent evaluation of The General Practice Nursing Foundation School (GPNFS) which was developed to address the lack of a standardised, consistent approach in preparing new General Practice Nurses. [Read more here.](#)



The QICN published a report focusing on environmental sustainability in community nursing. The report took a thematic approach to the issues, breaking down the challenges into concepts with examples that can be adopted into any community setting. [Read more here.](#)



The QICN commissioned Dr. Barbara Stilwell, QICN Fellow and renowned nurse researcher, academic and author to write a handbook highlighting the vital role of Community Nurse Consultants in shaping future healthcare. This was published in March 2025. [Read more here.](#)



The QICN published the 2024/2025 report of the NGS Elsie Wagg (Innovation) Scholarships showcasing five innovative projects led by community nurses. Each project demonstrated the power of gardening to improve health and wellbeing. [Read more here.](#)



The QICN published the updated edition of our popular "Community Nurse Lifespan" infographic, which highlights the vital contribution of community nurses at every stage of life – from pre-conception through to older age. [Read more here.](#)



The QICN published a fully revised and updated guide for nurses interested in working in the field of Inclusion Health. "New to Inclusion Health Nursing – Guidance for Nurses", was updated by Homeless and Inclusion Health Project Lead, Kirit Sehmbi. [Read more here.](#)



The QICN published an updated guide for nurses new to Adult Social Care Nursing or transitioning from other healthcare settings. "A Guide for Nurses New to Adult Social Care Nursing" was edited by Dr Agnes Fanning, Faculty of Adult Social Care Nursing Lead. [Read more here.](#)



Policy Influence &amp; development

## International Community Nursing Observatory (ICNO)

The QICN launched the International Community Nursing Observatory (ICNO) in November 2019.

The ICNO analyses data and trends in the community nursing workforce data in greater depth, to aid understanding of the challenges faced by services. It will collate and analyse data about community and primary care nursing services at a regional, national and international level. Professor Alison Leary MBE, Chair of Healthcare and Workforce Modelling at London South Bank University (LSBU) and a Fellow of the QICN is Director of the ICNO.

The ICNO seeks commissions designed to support data gathering and analysis that will provide evidence to enhance service planning and delivery in health and social care settings.



“ These findings are very worrying with over 80% of respondents having experienced career regression, and the majority being very experienced clinicians – the expertise of these nurses is critical to safe delivery of care. The reasons given are very concerning – the harms to patients due to lack of capacity and the stress and burnout for staff involved. We have to ensure a more flexible approach if we are to retain a skilled and competent nursing workforce.

Steph Lawrence MBE, Chief Executive of the QICN commenting on the ICNO report, ‘The Trap Door: Understanding Career Regression in Nursing’



To date, the ICNO has published 11 reports since its creation. In 2025, we published 'The Trap Door: Understanding Career Regression in Nursing', highlighting the overlooked trend of experienced nurses moving into lower-paid or less senior roles. [Read more here.](#)

The report explored the issue of 'downbanding' within the NHS Agenda for Change pay structure. It introduced the concept of the 'trap door', where skilled professionals are not only prevented from progressing but are actively pulled back into lower pay bands.

The ICNO's Director, Professor Alison Leary MBE, announced her intention to step down in March 2026, citing a desire to create an opportunity for new leadership as she transitions toward the end of her professional career.

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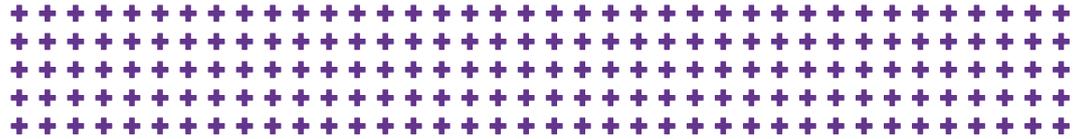
**“** When our health and care workforce are a cornerstone of high quality safe and effective care, it is tragic to identify significant evidence that suggests our workforce are struggling to find careers that enhance their professional identity and enable them to flourish in their workplace contexts.

Professor Sally Hardy, Director, Norfolk Initiative for Coastal and Rural Health Equalities

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**“** We talk a lot about the 'glass ceiling' and the 'sticky floor', but our research shows there's also a trap door – and experienced nurses are falling through it. Many are being forced to choose between their health, family life and their professional standing.

Professor Alison Leary MBE, Director of the International Community Nursing Observatory, commenting on 'The Trap Door: Understanding Career Regression in Nursing' report



Policy Influence &amp; development

## Community Nurse Executive Network (CNEN)

The Community Nurse Executive Network (CNEN) © is for nurses with executive responsibility for community nursing services to share and learn about issues relating to workforce, education, policy and service planning.

CNEN acts as a resource centre, where ideas and learning can be shared and interaction with colleagues facilitated, to enhance best practice and improve nursing care in the community. The network brings together high profile speakers to brief members about the latest developments and trends affecting the sector and how to manage future challenges.

CNEN is a membership-based network open to chief nurses, directors, deputy directors of nursing and equivalent roles within provider organisations that work in community healthcare.

You do not have to be a Queen's Nurse to join and membership is free. The CNEN network is sponsored by Hallam Medical.



“ I’m delighted to serve as Chair of the CNEN. The Network brings together senior nurse leaders across community and integrated care organisations in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, providing a space to share insights, learn from each other, and debate current issues. It has been invaluable in gathering data and shaping policy in community healthcare.

Helen Mehra, Chair, CNEN



There were ten meetings of CNEN in 2025.

On average 20 people register per event.

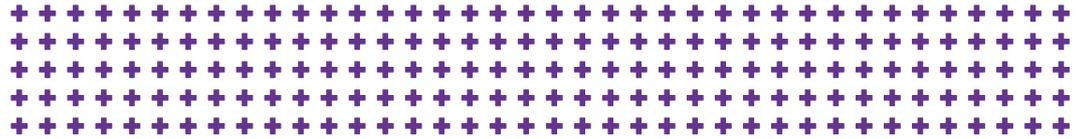
CNEN now consists of 230 members.

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**//** The QICN knocks it out of the park yet again! Brilliant video, well done on promoting what can be done!  
Member at CNEN meeting

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**//** Brilliant discussion today - really enjoyed it!  
Member at CNEN meeting



Policy Influence &amp; development

## ICB Chief Nurse Network

The NHS Confederation and The QICN created a national network for Chief Nurses of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) in England in February 2023.

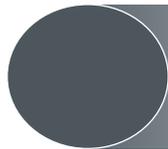
The aim is to support members in their strategic leadership roles based on system partnerships, integrating care and tackling inequalities in health. Initially this provided regular meetings with key speakers and a safe, confidential space for peer support. However, time for professional development has been the biggest challenge, so this Network offer has changed from December 2025 to become:

- A dedicated and confidential WhatsApp group, used for highlighting key policy issues and sharing experience & best practice, [apply here](#).
- A podcast series on leadership and hot topics for on-demand listening
- A regular newsletter highlighting key areas of work, with opportunities to get more involved nationally.

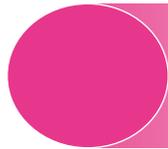
The network is chaired by Louise Patten, Strategic Advisor at the QICN. Lou is a registered District Nurse, and a QICN Fellow.

“ This network has developed a leadership approach focussed on partnerships, enhancing provider collaboration and strategic commissioning. It deliberately covers the broader topics of leadership that support Chief Nurses and leaders in their system roles, providing a unique and confidential conduit of feedback and information to those in Power  
Lou Patten, Strategic Advisor, The QICN





The network has 32 ICB Chief Nurse members.



Four webinars took place in 2025.

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**//** The session on anchor institutions was really helpful; collaboration with partners not previously on my radar will be essential if we are to serve our populations properly.  
Member at ICB Chief Nurse Network meeting

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**//** Moving to podcasts will be a very helpful way for us to hear about hot topics that we should know about but often don't have time to research ourselves.  
Member at ICB Chief Nurse Network meeting



Policy Influence &amp; development

## Organisational Membership

The QICN launched its organisational membership scheme for providers of community nursing services in 2024.

The membership scheme is open to all providers of community services, primary care and adult social care. It offers a huge range of benefits to organisations and their nursing and AHP staff, including CPD webinars, career development sessions, and a political influencing programme, 'Rising Stars', for staff to gain a deeper understanding of how local health services are affected by political decision making at a national level, and much more.



“ I just wanted to take the opportunity to thank the QICN for supporting and organising such a welcoming, thought provoking and inspiring day. It was so well organised and having a guided tour around the houses of parliament and house of lords was just amazing. Observing Rachel Reeves, the chancellor in action was just an opportunity I wouldn't have wanted to miss.

Political Influencing Experience delegate feedback

One of the Political Influencing sessions touring Westminster in 2025 led by former MP Ann Keen (second from left).



There are currently 47 member organisations that have joined the scheme. The organisations are predominantly standalone NHS community trusts, community interest companies, integrated trusts with large community services, primary care training hubs and care homes.

There have been 16 webinars during 2025. The Political Influencing experience included two sessions led by former MP Ann Keen.

44 Rising Stars have completed the career coaching programme to date with more to complete in early 2026.

The QICN was commissioned to run two bespoke development programmes in Leeds and Sutton. Both programmes aimed to empower and enable nurses to develop within their current role.

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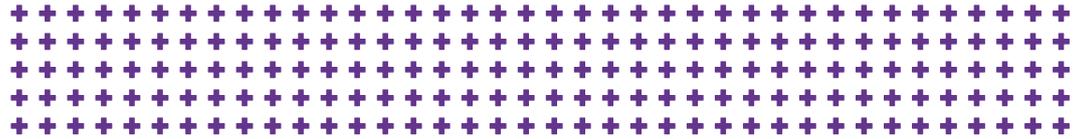
**//** It's been really beneficial to reflect on my self-worth and learn about the skills I already have to offer my organisation and my patients.

Rising Stars feedback

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**//** Feeling validated and empowered to take the time for me. To make plans for my future and career.

Rising Stars feedback



Innovation &amp; Quality Improvement

## Leadership Programmes

Since 2017, the QICN has hosted two leadership programmes; the Ambition to Lead programme and the Leading Strategically programme.

‘Leading Strategically’ - funded by the National Garden Scheme and is designed for Queen’s Nurses who are senior community nurse leaders working at Executive or Assistant/Associate Director level. The programme is a nine-day residential (3 residentials) designed to develop participants’ leadership skills for future roles or to reflect on their current ways of leading.

‘Ambition to Lead’ and is designed to support the professional development of nurses (not only Queen’s Nurses and in 2024 we widened the entry to Allied Health Professionals) working in the community to enhance their leadership skills in integrated contexts to the benefit of the people, families, and communities they serve.



“Our focused, carefully designed portfolio of leadership programmes is delivering powerful, lasting change for people and organisations alike. I’m delighted to lead this work on behalf of the QICN.”

Dr Cate Wood, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Nursing Programmes (Leadership)



In 2025, 15 delegates completed the Ambition to Lead programme and 14 completed Leading Strategically. Currently there is an Ambition to Lead programme and Leading Strategically programme running (both started in 2025).

In 2025, 12 nurses were funded by the National Garden Scheme on the Leading Strategically programme with two more nurses receiving external funding.

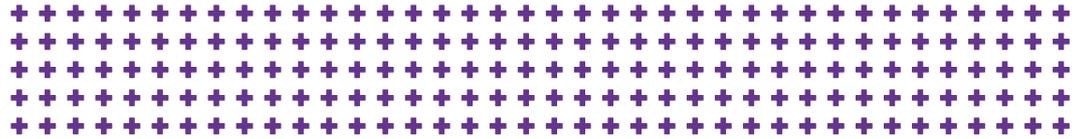
Since the launch of the Leadership programmes in 2017, 92 Leading Strategically graduates and 147 Ambition to Lead graduates have completed our Leadership programmes. A total of 239 participants have benefited from our programmes.

In 2025, 12 community nurses from the Isle of Man piloted 'The Evolving Leaders' programme, participating in six online and one face-to-face session focused on the specific challenges of community leadership.

The 'Evolving Leaders' programme aims to strengthen negotiation and influence skills while building the professional confidence and capability required for leaders to maximize their impact within their roles. Evaluation of the pilot will inform the programme being offered more widely to community nurses and AHPS in 2026/7.

“ The programme itself remains one of the most valuable experiences of my career to date. The insight I gained about myself during that time has undoubtedly been a catalyst for the growth I have experienced over the past six months. I have also been incredibly fortunate to build lifelong friendships and develop a network of expertise and support—having that knowledge just a WhatsApp message away truly feels like having a quiet army behind me.  
Leading Strategically programme graduate





Innovation &amp; Quality Improvement

## Community Nursing Innovation Programme (CNIP)

Nurse-led projects are one of the most direct ways in which we help nurses improve patient care.

Since 1990 the QICN has funded around 400 innovative projects across the whole range of community nursing specialisms in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Sharing the results of these projects helps us to drive improvements in knowledge and practice. Often, these funded projects become part of mainstream services.



“ We very much enjoy working with these inspirational community nurses and helping them put their ideas into action. The QICN model delivers measurable benefits for individual and population health, and helps nurses to develop new skills and realise their potential.

Dr Amanda Young, Director of Nursing Programmes (Innovation), The QICN

“ John has since secured stable housing and expressed deep gratitude for the role the garden played in his recovery.

Feedback from the Elsie Wagg Innovation project, Space to Grow.



Five Elsie Wagg scholarship projects funded by the National Garden Scheme were completed in June 2025. This brings the total of Elsie Wagg projects to 20.

The QICN published the 2024/2025 report of the NGS Elsie Wagg (Innovation) Scholarships showcasing five innovative projects led by community nurses. Each project demonstrated the power of gardening to improve health and wellbeing. [Read more here.](#)

Five nurse-led projects in the community were funded by the Burdett Trust for Nursing focusing on Diabetes. Their final report will be available shortly.

“ We are immensely proud to support this unique scholarship programme which helps to promote the health benefits of gardening and garden visiting to a wide cross section of the community and health care settings. This most recent report once again highlights the importance of gardens to health and wellbeing for people of all ages especially those in care homes and nursing homes. It also highlights the ingenuity and commitment of Queen’s Nurses and, as we head towards the National Garden Scheme’s centenary in 2027, reaffirms the joint legacy between us and our founder, the Queen’s Institute of Community Nursing.

Dr Richard Claxton, Chief Executive, the National Garden Scheme



Academic

## Standards

The QICN has worked with experts in health and social care for the four countries to develop Field Specific Standards for nine fields of practice in community nursing. Representatives include national organisations, academics, managers, clinicians, front line staff, and service users/patients/experts by experience/carers/families. We are very grateful to all those who contributed to the process. Standards are available for the following specialisms:

- + Adult Social Care Nursing
- + Community Children's Nursing
- + Community Mental Health Nursing
- + District Nursing
- + General Practice Nursing
- + Inclusion Health Nursing
- + Health and Justice Nursing
- + Community Learning Disability Nursing
- + Community Palliative and End of Life Care



“Creating our future community nursing workforce requires a consistent approach to the development of excellent practice and clinical leadership. Our work on specific standards is designed to build upon the broad regulatory standards to ensure wherever a person lives, works or accesses services the care they receive is of the highest quality, based on evidence and is tailored to their own individual needs.

Professor John Unsworth OBE, Chair of QICN Council



The QICN Field Specific Standards (FSS) for the 2024/2025 academic year have been endorsed by thirteen HEIs delivering the SPQ programme. The QICN FSS for the 2025/2026 academic year have been endorsed by fourteen HEIs delivering the SPQ programme.

A member of the QICN team has spoken to all students on an endorsed QICN programme. This has generated an interest in becoming a Queen's Nurse and details of how to apply were shared with them.

HEIs evaluated the use of the QICN Standards and said, "The QICN Standards were helpful in ensuring the SPQ curriculum was aligned with national expectations for advanced practice. A noticeable strength was the student's ability to critically appraise evidence and apply it to complex clinical scenarios. Strong leadership was evident, particularly service improvement and managing change."

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**“** There are real benefits to nurses, employers and patients flowing from the QICN Field Specific Standards. Individual nurses will have access to clearly articulated educational pathways based on standards which are consistently applied by HEIs for their field of practice. This will have a wider benefit in terms of staff development, recruitment and retention for employers across the system. Nurses graduating from SPQ programmes endorsed by the QICN will have recognised skills and knowledge, mapped against all relevant national standards, to enable them to practice and to lead teams at an advanced level, improving care for patients, families and residents with complex needs in community settings.

Steph Lawrence MBE, QICN Chief Executive



Activities / Funding Partnerships

## Events

The QICN events in 2025 continued to be a mix of online and in person.

The Annual Conference took place online again but this time, over three days with a line-up of over 30 speakers and viewed internationally. The Awards Ceremony took place live in London, with one ceremony in the afternoon and one in the evening. Over 500 Queen's Nurses received their title.

As well as main events, the QICN held webinars, meetings, and workshops for each QICN Network, Organisational Membership, Leadership and Innovation programmes including celebrating International Nurses Day in May at Littlethorpe Manor, an NGS garden, with over 50 Queen's Nurses.

In total, QICN events numbered well over 200 in 2025. We also held a roundtable with John Oldham regarding neighbourhoods.

[Click here to view summaries of the QICN's events](#)



“ This year is my 10 year anniversary of becoming a QN. I am still so very proud to be a very small part of this wonderful network of fellow professionals. Today is a excellent example of why we all should be. A fantastic AGM, thank you!

QN feedback from QN Conference

“Inspiring, thought-provoking conference, left me feeling invigorated, inspired and motivated. Thank you.

Delegate feedback from Annual Conference 2025



**Awards Ceremony:** The ceremony took place at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel in London and was once again split into two: one in the afternoon, one in the evening. For the second time, it was also live streamed to include those unable to attend in person. Over 700 guests and awardees were present.

**Awards Ceremony cont.** The awards given were Fellowship of the Institute; Graduates of the QICN Ambition to Lead and Leading Strategically programmes; Leaders of QICN community nursing innovation programmes; The International Community Nurse of the Year Award and Memorial prizes for post-registration nursing students.

**Annual Conference:** The QICN held its conference online again this time over three days with the theme being “Leading Equitable Care”. Over 1800 delegates attended. The platform, VFairs, continued to be very popular with delegates with over 95% feeding back positively.

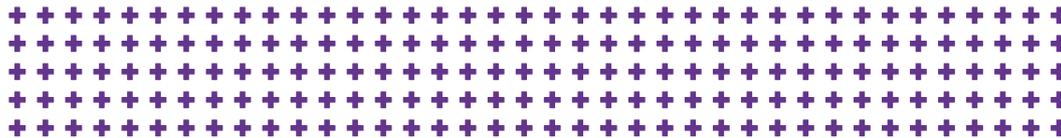
**The Queen’s Nurse Annual Conference** was held online on 13 March. A meeting solely for QNs, the theme of the day-long conference was ‘Looking to the Future’. It was attended by over 500 Queen’s Nurses and featured a range of speakers including Dame Elizabeth Anionwu and Dr Barbara Stilwell.

**The William Rathbone X Annual Lecture and Award Presentation:** took place on 9 May and the lecture was given Professor Olga Yakusheva, of Johns Hopkins University in the United States, ‘The Human Capital Approach to Nursing Value and Payment’. The Award was presented to Carolyn Bell, Director of Patient Services at Prospect Hospice in Swindon, Wiltshire.

**New faculty launches:** In 2025 we had launch events for the following faculties: General Practice Nursing, Adult Social Care Nursing and Mental Health Nursing and Learning Disability Nursing. [Read more here.](#)

**House of Lords:** The QICN held an event in the House of Lords, hosted by Baroness Mary Watkins, where the Nuffield Trust research headlines on the District Nursing service was shared. The report by Dr Billy Palmer demonstrated that the service is in a lamentable state of decline.

**ICCHNR conference:** The QICN hosted the Conference of the International Collaboration for Community Health Nursing Research (ICCHNR) in London, on 15 April. The theme of the Conference focused on community nursing research; community nursing researchers from 36 countries participated in the event.



Activities / Funding Partnerships

## The National Garden Scheme

The National Garden Scheme has supported the QICN since 1927 and is our single biggest funder.

We are very grateful to the National Garden Scheme, which supports the Queen’s Nurse programme and all 3500 Queen’s Nurses.

We enjoy a shared history as the National Garden Scheme was created in 1927 at a QICN council meeting by Trustee, Elsie Wagg, who proposed it as a fundraising idea. Since then, the National Garden Scheme has raised millions of pounds not just for the QICN, but for other nursing and caring charities too.

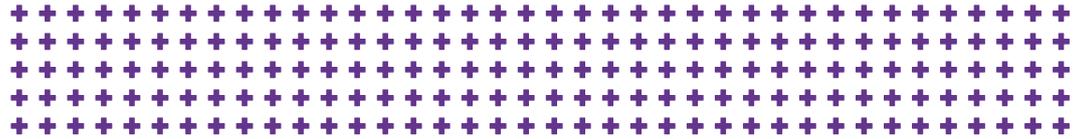
2025 was the fourth year for the NGS Elsie Wagg Innovations Scholarship, 5 projects completed in 2025 and 5 new projects started.



“ The funding that we receive from the National Garden Scheme is essential for us to support nurses and through them patients, families and carers, in homes and communities everywhere. Our thanks to the garden owners, volunteers, and county organisers and staff of the National Garden Scheme who together make this incredibly generous donation possible. We really couldn’t do it without you.

Steph Lawrence MBE, Chief Executive, The QICN

Queen’s Nurses- including QICN Chief Executive and Queen’s Nurse, Steph Lawrence MBE- at an NGS Open Garden, Littlethorpe Manor, just outside Ripon, in May 2025.



The QICN received an incredible donation of £475,000 from the National Garden Scheme in 2025. The funding supports the Queen's Nurses programme, as well as the Elsie Wagg (Innovation) Scholarships and the QICN's leadership programmes.

Queen's Nurses continue to visit open gardens during the year, they are encouraged to take selfies of themselves for social media. In May 2025, Queen's Nurses celebrated International Nurses Day by visiting an NGS garden in Littlethorpe, in Yorkshire, see photo on previous page.

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**//** John has since secured stable housing and expressed deep gratitude for the role the garden played in his recovery.

Feedback from the Elsie Wagg Innovation project, Space to Grow.

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**//** They were delighted to achieve a Level 1 food hygiene certificate and now volunteer in the Wishing Well Cafe attached to their GP practice.

Feedback from the NGS Elsie Wagg Innovation project, The Healing Plot.



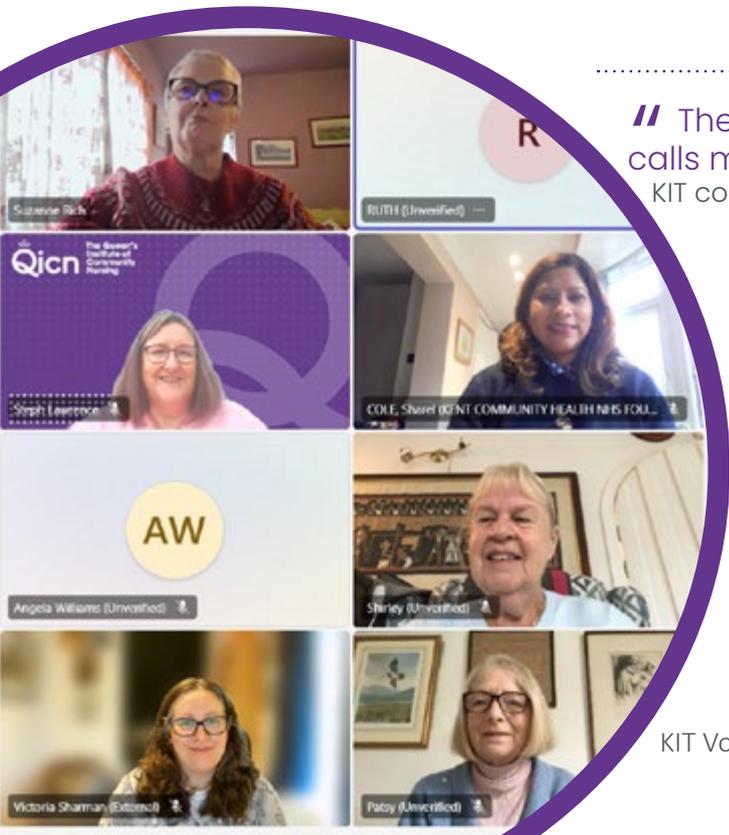


Support for Nurses

## Keep in Touch

The QICN's Keep In Touch (KIT) programme is a practical way in which we aim to strengthen the Queen's Nurse community, maintaining contact with our Queen's Nurses, past and present.

The KIT programme provides volunteers with opportunities to speak to retired Queen's or community nurses regularly on the phone, to talk about life experiences, aspects of nursing current and historic, memories and future plans. Volunteers call their contact regularly – usually once a week, or in some cases once a fortnight or monthly. Led by Suzanne Rich, KIT's Programme Manager, 2026 will celebrate 10 years of the programme.



“ The highlight of my week is when my KIT Volunteer calls me.  
KIT contact

“ I have been calling my contact for almost ten years – looking forward to another ten years of calls!  
KIT volunteer

KIT Volunteers at an online meeting in 2025.



The KIT Team of 30 dedicated Volunteers currently supports 30 contacts, with 18 other contacts receiving regular calls from the QICN.

KIT sends flowers for special birthdays (80 or 90 or 90+) as well as birthday, Easter and Christmas cards.

KIT Volunteer meetings occur twice a year, one face-to-face and one online, where Volunteers share their experiences and any issues/concerns.

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**//** I am so pleased that I am still part of the Queen's Nurses – having a volunteer makes me feel part of the "QN family".

KIT contact

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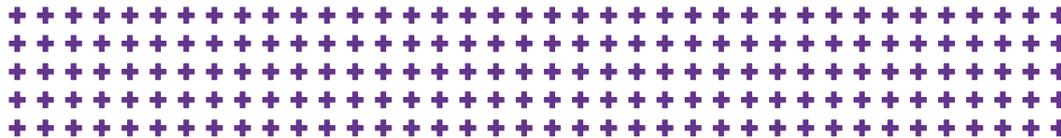
**//** Calling my contact each week is a total joy – we laugh a lot together!

KIT volunteer

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**//** My Volunteer is now a very special friend.

KIT contact



Support for Nurses

## Financial Assistance

The QICN offers financial assistance to registered nurses who work or have worked in the community for a minimum of three years when they experience a life crisis which has impacted on their finances. A life crisis is usually because of a sudden change of circumstances which can be brought on by a range of different situations which is affecting them financially.

Although we awarded fewer grants in 2025 it was a very busy year. We received over 200 applications and enquiries which is twice as many as we received 5 years ago. The applications are more complex and as a result take longer to process.

The nature of the applications is changing with nurses struggling more with day to day living, the profile of our applicants is changing too with younger community nurses facing financial hardship through illness, bereavement and separation.

If an applicant does not meet our eligibility criteria, we can normally signpost to them other nursing charities or organisations.



.....  
// I cannot thank you enough. This truly means so much to us and will be a huge help as I navigate getting back to work within the role that I love, Community Nursing.  
Recipient of Financial Assistance

.....  
// Thank you so so much for this lovely news. I am honestly so so grateful to you and QICN.  
Recipient of Financial Assistance



We paid a total of 163 grants in 2025, to working and retired community nurses this was over £50,000 from our Support for Nurses fund.

We awarded over £26,000 in single grants to community nurses in 2025. There were 55 community nurses who received a single grant from us, many of them facing challenging and difficult periods in their lives

We sent Sainsburys vouchers to 10 Nurses to help them to buy essential food items for their families.

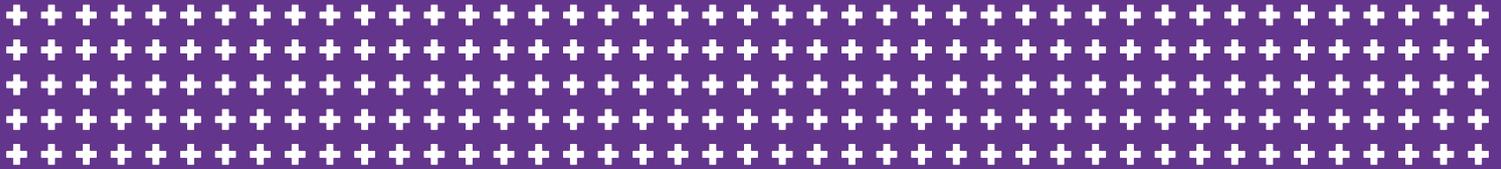
We were able to offer further financial support to some that are still affected financially from Covid, the impact now is for those that have had to reduce working hours as they are still suffering with physical symptoms.

“ I was in desperate worry about the state of my household finances after separation from my partner. As a single dad, I found myself on one income with two young children. One thing that particularly worried me was that our son had outgrown his cot; I wanted him to have the same quality of furniture as we had given his older sister. Thanks to the QICN Grant, I have been able to buy him a brand new bed-frame and mattress that will last him for years, and there was enough as well to buy a duvet and several sets of bed linen. This has taken a huge weight off my mind, especially with winter and Christmas approaching.

Recipient of Financial Assistance

“ I purchased some clothing items for my return to work as I am still unable to do finer motor skills due to my injury – such as zips and shoe laces. If I had not received the grant I would have really struggled financially so I cannot thank the QICN enough.

Recipient of Financial Assistance



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