

# Notes of the Cross Party Group on Nursing and Midwifery

9 March 2016

Conference Room C&D, Ty Hywel

8am – 9am

## Present:

- Julie Morgan AM, Chair
- Kirsty Williams AM
- David Rees AM
- Dr Martin Steggall, Dean, Faculty of Life Sciences and Education, University of South Wales
- Francesca Elner, RCN Student Committee Member
- Andrea Gristock, Assistant Director Quality Improvement and Clinical Governance, Cwm Taf University Local Health Board
- Catherine Dew, Head of Patient Care & Experience, Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee, Cwm Taf University Local Health Board
- Helen Whyley, Nursing Officer, Welsh Government
- Professor Heather Waterman, Head of School of Healthcare Sciences, Cardiff University
- Dr Jayne Cutter, Head of the Department of Nursing, Swansea University
- Dr Susan Darra, Head of Midwifery Education and LME, Swansea University
- Dr Elizabeth Mason, Deputy Head of Schools Teaching and Learning, School of Healthcare Sciences and School of Medical Sciences, Bangor University
- Richard Jones MBE, Council Member and Board Member, RCN Wales
- Tina Donnelly CBE, TD, DL, CCMI, Group Secretary and Director, RCN Wales
- Gareth Phillips, Board Member, RCN Wales
- Liz Rees, Board Member, RCN Wales
- Alison Davies, Associate Director (Professional Practice), RCN Wales
- Lisa Turnbull, Policy and Public Affairs Adviser, RCN Wales
- Annie Muyang, Policy and Public Affairs Assistant, RCN Wales
- Helen West, Office of Julie Morgan
- Nancy Cavill, Office of Julie Morgan

**1. Welcome from Julie Morgan AM, Chair**

Julie Morgan AM welcomed attendees to the meeting.

**2. Opening remarks from Tina Donnelly CBE, TD, DL, CCMI, Director, RCN Wales**

Tina Donnelly provided an opening statement on the student nurse bursary, and how it allows student nurses to fully commit to their study in both an academic and clinical setting, highlighting how this is different from being a regular student.

**3. Dr Martin Steggall, Dean, Faculty of Life Sciences and Education, University of South Wales**

Dr Steggall began by stating that there is uncertainty with how the change to student nurse funding will play out in Wales, compared to the current situation in England, where students are expected to be worse off. Dr Steggall also mentioned that there would be unintended consequences for certain groups, such as mature students and students from deprived backgrounds.

In regards to removing a cap on numbers on nursing courses at university, this would not lead to an increased number of nurses as there would not be enough clinical placements to support them. Further to this, Dr Steggall noted that with an increase in university fees in Wales, University Health Boards may benefit as universities could allocate part of that increased tuition fee to support further training and practice.

**4. Francesca Elner, Welsh Student Council Committee Member, RCN Wales**

Francesca began by reiterating Tina Donnelly's point that nursing students are not like other university students, who often bring a wealth of life experience to their study and come from a variety of backgrounds. The threat to the bursary is likely to deter the potential students who have come from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from mature students to people who already hold a university degree in another subject.

In response to Dr Steggall's point on removing a cap on numbers on nursing courses, Francesca voiced her concerns that placement areas are struggling with their current numbers. Any increase in numbers of students as a result of this would lead to increased pressures and as a result, patient safety would be at risk.

**5. Open to discussion**

Following these presentations, Julie Morgan AM chaired a lively discussion with participants on student nurse funding and future workforce planning. Points raised included the potential 'brain drain' of student nurses who study in Wales but move to work elsewhere, how mature students and students from deprived backgrounds may be deterred from nursing due to the removal of the bursary, the use of a traditional student loan system, and how sustainable the current student finance system is in Wales and how to make staying in Wales once study is complete more attractive to potential students.

**6. Closing remarks and vote of thanks from Tina Donnelly CBE, TD, DL, CCMI, Director, RCN Wales**

Tina Donnelly gave a formal vote of thanks to the cross-party group.