



Adult Social Care Nursing Advisory Council (SCNAC)
MIDLANDS Region Quarterly Meeting 06
Wednesday 22nd October 2025, 09:30-11:00

<u>Attending:</u>		
Jo-Anne Wilson	-	Registered Manager, Royal British Legion and Co-Chair for the Midlands SCNAC
Anita Astle	-	Managing Director, Wren Nursing Home and Chair for the Midlands SCNAC
Adem Oyekan	-	Private Secretary to the Chief Nurse for Adult Social Care, DHSC
Diane Mayhew	-	Co-Founder, Rights for Residents
Itai Nyamatore	-	Registered Manager, GAIN Care
Jayanthi Antony	-	Registered Manager, The Willows Nursing and Residential Home
Joyce Fletcher	-	Employer Link Service Adviser for the Independent Health and Social Care (Midlands), NMC, attending on behalf of Tony Newman
Lorna Hollowood	-	Assistant Professor in Nursing, University of Birmingham and Clinical Associate with Gold Standards Framework and PhD Student – currently collecting data in UK Care Homes
Lynne Bowers	-	ADASS, West Midlands
Rita Flanagan	-	Senior Regional Director, North, UK Care Services BUPA
Sam Preston	-	Lead Nurse Independent Health & Social Care for the East Midlands, RCN
Shanci Mathew	-	Registered Manager, Morton Grange Nursing Home
Tom Rose	-	Admiral Nurse Clinical Lead, St. Barnabas Hospice Lincolnshire
Katie Welborn	-	Head of Quality and Safety for OOH, Black Country ICB
Jaqueline Barnes	-	Regional CNO and Director of Nursing Professional & Systems Development, Midlands Region attending on behalf of Nina Morgan
Sonia Pritchard	-	SCNACS Admin, The Outstanding Society
<u>Apologies:</u>		
Deborah Sturdy	-	Chief Nurse for Social Care, DHSC. Adem Oyekan attending on her behalf
Sally Roberts	-	CNO, Black Country and West Birmingham – Katie Welborn attending on her behalf
Yvonne Higgins	-	CNO Northamptonshire
Charlie Bitchenor	-	Training Manager, Heritage Manor



Jasmine Stanhope	-	Co- Chair Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland ASNAC and RMN and Managing Director of Rushcliffe Care Group
Lynn Tolley	-	CNO Staffordshire & Stoke
Steph Cartwright	-	Walsall Together Project Update
Shirley Hall	-	Director of Care and Wellbeing, Star and Garter
Vanessa Whatley	-	CNO Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
Helen Sands	-	Head of All-Age Continuing Healthcare, NHS Lincolnshire ICB
Louise Luckman	-	Senior Clinical Quality Assurance Lead, Birmingham & Solihull ICB. Also Chair of the Social Care Nurses Network for Birmingham & Solihull.
Andrea Westlake	-	Director of Nursing for Social Care
Tony Newman	-	Regulations Advisor, Midlands Area, NMC
Nina Morgan	-	Yvonne Higgins attending on her behalf
Rosa Waddingham	-	CNO for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICB - Ryan Alsop attending on her behalf
Kay Darby	-	CNO Birmingham & Solihull
Vicky Sandy-Davies	-	Independent Health & Social Care Lead Nurse, RCN
Mike Slator	-	Project Support Specialist, VIVALDI Social Care & The OS
Ryan Allen	-	Learning Disability Nurse

Please see the attached spreadsheet for the action points of this meeting.

Date of Future Meetings:

- Thursday 22nd January 2026, 9.30-11.00am
- TBC April/May 2026

Note Summary:

Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) Updates: Deborah Sturdy sent her apologies and Adem Oyekan provided updates from the DHSC on her behalf:

- **Council of Deans Network Launch:** Adem announced the launch of a new network by the Council of Deans for students and newly qualified nurses, aiming to support their entry into adult social care and address workforce challenges.
- **Nurse Prescribing Pilots:** The nurse prescribing pilot has commenced, with six ICBs selected through expressions of interest; the initiative is intended to build the case for further funding and wider rollout, and updates will be shared as the project progresses.
- **Nursing Strategy and Consultation:** The Chief Nurse Officer is developing a 10-year nursing strategy, with the consultation phase recently concluded; social care nurses have



been encouraged to contribute, and concerns about learning disability nursing numbers are being addressed through an upcoming national round table.

- **Upcoming Events and Programmes:** Adem highlighted several events, including a follow-up to the undergraduate placement strategy, plans for an adult social care nursing week in 2026, and ongoing work on the Casey review and sector relations with the NMC, as well as the resilience-based clinical supervision (RBCS) programme.
- **Departmental Changes and Support:** Significant changes are expected within the DHSC, including staff departures; support will continue through monitored inboxes and senior policy colleagues during Deborah Sturdy's absence.

Barriers to Social Care Nurse Prescribing: The council discussed ongoing barriers to social care nurse prescribing:

- **Recognition and Utilisation Issues:** Lynne reported that some social care nurses accredited as prescribers face reluctance from GPs to recognise their expertise, resulting in some nurses being unable to write prescriptions despite being qualified.
- **Pilot Site Updates:** Anita and Shanci Mathew confirmed that three of the six nurse prescribing pilot sites are in the Midlands, specifically Coventry, Warwickshire, Nottingham, and Derbyshire, allowing for regional collaboration and support.
- **Funding and Governance Challenges:** Tom and Katie highlighted that funding for prescriptions and ongoing governance, including competency sign-off and access to training, remain unresolved, with primary care hubs not extending support to social care nurses in some areas.
- **Action Requests and Collaboration:** Anita requested assistance in identifying DPPs (Designated Prescribing Practitioners) to support the project, particularly in Nottingham and Derbyshire.

COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility and Disability Advocacy: Diane raised concerns about young disabled adults with severe learning difficulties being denied the COVID-19 vaccine due to rigid eligibility criteria despite significant health vulnerabilities, prompting discussion and commitments:

- **Escalation and Advocacy:** Adem agreed to escalate the issue to policy colleagues and the UKHSA, while Lynne suggested seeking flexibility in local circumstances and highlighted ongoing work on the social model of disability to influence government policy.



- **Broader Disability Policy Efforts:** Lynne described efforts to promote a social model of disability and influence welfare benefit reform, working with colleagues and the House of Lords to address systemic disadvantages faced by people with disabilities.

Development of a Regional Dysphagia Toolkit: Jo-Anne, Anita, and council members discussed the shift in regional priority to develop a digital dysphagia toolkit, aiming to address delays in assessment and improve interim care for individuals with swallowing difficulties, with input from working group members and calls for wider participation.

- **Toolkit Scope and Content:** The council outlined the toolkit's focus areas, including food preparation, mental capacity, eating and drinking at risk, oral care, emergency procedures, positive mealtime experiences, and relative support, aiming for a unified resource across the Midlands.
- **Interim Care and Training:** Discussions highlighted the need for guidance on interim care while awaiting speech and language therapy assessments, with suggestions to revive past practices of training care home nurses as dysphagia specialists.
- **Legal and Risk Assessment Issues:** Tom raised questions about risk feeding and legal responsibilities, especially for individuals lacking capacity, and the council agreed on the need for clear guidance and best practice standards.
- **Collaboration and Participation:** Jo-Anne encouraged members to join the working group or contribute to specific sections of the toolkit, emphasising the value of collective input and practical experience.

Fast Track Funding and Continuing Healthcare Challenges: Shanci, Itai, Tom, and others discussed significant challenges with fast-track funding and continuing healthcare (CHC) assessments:

- **Inconsistent Fast Track Criteria:** Participants reported that fast-track funding is often granted in hospital but withdrawn once individuals are in care homes, with local ICBs applying varying and sometimes restrictive criteria.
- **Assessment Process Concerns:** Shanci described the prevalence of remote (Teams-based) CHC assessments, which are unsuitable for many residents with dementia, and noted that face-to-face assessments are often only conducted when funding is likely to be withdrawn.



- **Impact on Residents and Providers:** The withdrawal or denial of funding creates distress for residents and families, financial challenges for care homes, and can result in avoidable clinical risks and council financial pressures.
- **Advocacy and Best Practice:** Diane and Jo-Anne emphasised the importance of involving relatives in assessments for individuals lacking capacity, and the council discussed the need for standardised, person-centred approaches across regions.

Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and Regional Restructuring: Jacqueline, Lynne, and Katie provided updates:

- **Chief Nursing Officer's (CNO's) Strategy and ICB Clustering:** Jacqueline reported that the CNO's strategy is nearing completion, with publication expected in January, and described the ongoing clustering of 11 ICBs into five, with new executive leadership being established.
- **Neighbourhood Working Initiatives:** The neighbourhood health model is being implemented across the Midlands, with eight teams participating in national work and efforts to ensure social care nursing is included in local discussions.
- **Representation and Engagement:** Lynne and Katie raised concerns about variable involvement of social care nurses and ICB nurses in locality arrangements, calling for clearer guidance to ensure fair representation and the inclusion of patient voices.
- **Skills for Care Database:** Itai highlighted the usefulness of the Skills for Care database in connecting nurses across regions, and Jacqueline agreed to explore access to this resource for broader engagement.

Research and Networking on Windrush Generation in Care Homes: Lorna introduced her PhD research on the experiences of the Windrush generation in UK care homes:

- **Participant Recruitment:** Lorna requested assistance in identifying care home residents from Black African or Black Caribbean backgrounds willing to participate in her research, offering flexible interview arrangements and confidentiality.
- **Promotion and Support:** Diane offered to share information about the study with her large Facebook group, and Lorna agreed to provide details for wider dissemination.

NMC and RCN Engagement and Support Initiatives: Joyce from the NMC and Samantha from the RCN provided updates:



- **NMC Outreach and Learning:** Joyce described efforts to map independent social care sector care homes, offer learning sessions on topics such as preceptorship and accountability, and invited council members to request presentations for their organisations.
- **RCN Events and Resources:** Samantha announced upcoming workshops and networking events at Nursing Live, support for the social prescribing pilot, and the release of a guide for newly registered nurses, with a focus on maximising member engagement and resource utilisation.

Updates on Skills for Care, Policy, and Workforce Issues: Lynne provided a wide-ranging update:

- **Policy and Consultation Updates:** Lynne highlighted the fair pay agreement consultation, the establishment of a national pay negotiating body, and discussions about a potential national care service, all aimed at improving parity and esteem for social care professionals.
- **Workforce and Recruitment Trends:** Recent reports show a reduction in social care nurse recruitment and a high reliance on internationally educated nurses, with every ADASS region now having an international recruitment team to address associated risks.
- **Research and Collaboration Opportunities:** Lynne mentioned ongoing research projects, such as the Squire project on stroke, and encouraged collaboration with regional clinical networks to address issues like dysphagia.

SCNACs Contract Management: Sonia announced that due to the changes with Skills for Care now managing the SCNACs contract through The Outstanding Society (OS), OS Director Zoë Fry had stepped down as the SCNACs Co-Chair for the Southeast and was now overseeing all regions, and outlined plans for greater alignment with the 10-year health plan and upcoming events.