

Registered Nursing Home Association

Fit for purpose in the 21st century health care environment



RNHA



Our mission for the nursing home sector

We seek to provide owners and managers with:

- Fast, accurate information about issues which affect the running of nursing homes
- Access to professional expertise on standards, finance, the law and public relations
- Support in their dealings with public authorities at a local level
- Management tools to enable them to offer high quality, cost-effective care
- Education and training opportunities
- Opportunities for exchanging ideas with other nursing homes
- Strong representation at a national level



RNHA



The only national association which exclusively represents nursing home owners



Helping nursing homes to meet the challenge

These are challenging times for registered nursing homes in the independent sector. New national care standards have been introduced. Social services departments are generally not paying an economic rate for publicly funded nursing home residents. Over recent years running costs, including wages, have been rising faster than income. Owners face the unrelenting pressure of having to provide high quality care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year whilst balancing the books.

The Registered Nursing Home Association (RNHA) is the *only* national body which focuses

exclusively on the needs and concerns of nursing homes. Membership is open only to nursing home owners. All the RNHA's services and activities - nationally, regionally and locally - are geared to supporting their efforts to make a success of their businesses. If you think you could benefit from belonging to an organisation of like-minded people all facing a similar set of pressures, contact our head office on 0121-454 2511 and we will send you an information pack and application form.



Information at the end of a telephone

RNHA head office in Birmingham deals with hundreds of inquiries from members every week of the year. They range enormously in content - from interpretations of care standards to advice on registration technicalities.

What matters is that there is a single authoritative source to turn to. The Association's staff will either be able to give the answers immediately or will consult an RNHA expert or database for the information and contact the caller with the minimum of delay.

Keeping in touch with a rapidly changing business environment



Member's comment

"I have survived D Day. Being the first home in Torbay to be inspected against the new care standards, I feel I must express my sincere appreciation for the detailed guidance, support and documentation provided by your team."

**B.D. Miller, Matron,
Carisbrooke Nursing Home,
Torquay, Devon**

The Care Standards Act has placed many additional responsibilities on nursing homes in terms of clinical and administrative procedures, quality thresholds, staff training, the physical environment and security checks on newly appointed employees. New legislation affecting nursing homes is often complex. Busy home operators need clear, timely information and advice on what it means for them.

The RNHA ensures that all its

members are kept informed not only during the passage of legislation through Parliament but also in the period leading up to its implementation. Better to know well in advance what is expected of you than to discover late in the day that you are not complying with a regulation that has the full force of law behind it.

Sign of the Blue Cross



RNHA members are able to display the coveted Blue Cross sign on their stationery and brochures and on the outside wall of their nursing home.

The appearance of the sign indicates the commitment of the nursing home concerned to the objectives of the RNHA for providing consistently high quality care to older people and others with long-term nursing needs.



The Blue Cross mark of excellence: a tool for evaluating standards

Members of the RNHA benefit from access to a range of valuable management tools to help them achieve and sustain better outcomes of care and to do this as cost-effectively as possible.

Such tools include, for example, a comprehensive quality assurance manual (in hard copy and CD-ROM versions) which sets out model policies and procedures across the complete spectrum of nursing home activity - from service users' rights to safe storage of drugs, medicines and equipment.

Importantly, the manual shows how each policy can be linked directly to specific standards laid down in the Care Standards Act, thus enabling home owners and managers to respond quickly and authoritatively to questions posed by inspectors.

Also reflecting the RNHA's

practical, 'hands on' approach to supporting its members is a manual containing a nursing home financial model and sample business plan. This provides a system for planning, recording and analysing income and expenditure.

Member's comment

"We wanted to thank the staff of the RNHA for all the work that must have gone into the dissemination of many items of information over the past few months. Frankly, one wonders how many nursing home can possibly be positioned to cope with the future without the knowledge that comes from belonging the RNHA. In our view, any home that does not belong is at a significant disadvantage."

Rohan Robinson, St Joseph's Nursing Home, Manor House, Danbury, Essex



Briefings for policy-makers

It is vital that the contribution made by nursing homes to the care of vulnerable people should be understood by those who make policies which affect the way nursing homes are run.

As well as undertaking face-to-face lobbying with key decision-makers at all levels, the RNHA regularly distributes briefings on key matters relevant to the sector and responds on behalf of nursing home owners to Government consultation documents.

Copies of briefings are posted on the Association's web site and are also sent to members to keep them informed about the major issues being debated at a national level.



Help with CRB checks

Details of all newly appointed staff have to be submitted to the Criminal Records Bureau for checks as to their suitability in caring for vulnerable people. Eventually, all care home staff must go through the process.

On behalf of its members, the RNHA acts as a clearing house for the submission of forms to the CRB. Nursing homes simply complete the relevant sections of the forms (about which they can seek advice from the RNHA's special adviser). The forms are then sent on to the Association's head office, which checks that they have been filled in correctly, deals with the remaining sections and forwards them directly to the CRB.



Support for local negotiations with social services and other funding agencies

The RNHA recognises the need for nursing homes in the same locality to work together in securing the best possible terms from social services and other agencies for their publicly funded patients. It is also useful for owners and managers to be able to get together to compare notes and exchange ideas on general issues affecting their homes.

The Association has 35 branches across the UK which, with support

from head office, seek to fulfil this role. When necessary, the RNHA will put its weight behind local efforts to negotiate with individual local authority social services departments.

On occasions, this may be linked with an intensive publicity campaign to help focus public attention on the financial and other difficulties facing the independent nursing home sector.



Education and training for nursing home staff

Nursing homes are very much about people caring for people. Staff training is therefore critically important to ensure that the highest possible standards are maintained at all times.

The RNHA runs or supports a wide range of educational courses for managers and staff of its member nursing homes. It also negotiates with national bodies such as TOPPS to ensure that, as required by legislation, at least 50 per cent of nursing home staff achieve the appropriate NVQ level by 2005.



Member's comment

"Just a note to say 'thank you' for all your information and help with reference to the state of our industry.."

Anthony Gray, Manor House Nursing Home, Stamford Bridge, York

Nursing Home News

There are many different journals dealing with the care sector generally. But only one of them is produced by nursing homes for nursing homes. The RNHA's *Nursing Home News* is a high quality, full colour, bi-monthly magazine packed with up-to-date information, analysis and comment about matters that are specific to the running of nursing homes.



Professional advice in dealing with a potential 'crisis'

Suppose your home experiences an adverse clinical incident that could lead to potential litigation from a resident's family. Suppose a disaffected former member of staff approaches the news media with allegations about the way the home is run. Suppose you are called late at night by a reporter from a national 'tabloid' wanting a comment on a story that is going to appear in tomorrow morning's edition.

We would all like to think it couldn't and wouldn't happen. But, for reasons that are often beyond the control of home owners and managers, such things do occur.

If that happened to you, where could you turn for instant advice at no direct cost to your home? The RNHA provides legal and public relations services that can be called upon at any time, including evenings, week-ends and bank holidays - by members who may be confronted by such a crisis.



Promoting your nursing home through the RNHA web site

The RNHA's web site, which is visited by hundreds of people every week, contains a section specifically targeted at those looking for nursing homes for themselves or a relative.

All they have to do is to open the page displaying a map of the United Kingdom divided into regions. They click on the relevant region and select the local area they are most interested in. A list of RNHA

members' nursing homes - complete with addresses and telephone numbers - then appears.

It means that someone who lives, for example, in Guildford or York can quickly and easily find out the names and locations of nursing homes within a convenient distance and travelling time.

The web site also contains direct links to members' own web sites.



Conferences, seminars and workshops give managers a chance to air their views

To help its members keep abreast of developments impacting on the nursing home sector, the RNHA holds regular events at which they can

both receive up-to-date briefings at first hand and take the opportunity to express their views.

During 2002, for example, the Association ran a series of regional workshops on the implications of the Care Standards Act. Its annual conference - the best attended for several years - drew top speakers from both the independent and public sectors, including William Laing of Laing & Buisson, who predicted a massive increase in demand for elderly care over the next thirty years.

Such occasions are useful to



nursing home owners and managers not only as a means of enhancing their own knowledge about issues which could affect their businesses but also for the chance to network with people facing the same challenges as themselves.



Lower prices from shared purchasing deals

RNHA members benefit financially from a host of special arrangements negotiated by the Association at discounted rates with suppliers. These include:

- the *Blue Cross Nursing Home Insurance Scheme* offering cover specifically tailored to the needs and circumstances of individual homes;
- the *Blue Cross Purchasing Partnership*, which ensures that homes can purchase food, milk, uniforms and a variety of other essential products at exceptionally competitive prices;
- the *Blue Cross Energy Scheme*, offering big savings on gas and electricity bills;
- *Blue Cross Stakeholder Pensions*, backed up by the highly reputable Scottish Widows organisation;
- *Blue Cross Private Medical Insurance*.





Lobbying for nursing homes at a national level

At a national level, the RNHA is the only organisation to lobby exclusively on behalf of nursing homes. No other body can claim to fulfil this role.

The chairman, Rosemary Strange, and chief executive officer, Frank Ursell (pictured right), communicate frequently with Ministers and senior civil servants to impress upon them the important contribution which nursing homes make to the health of population and to draw the Government's attention to problems caused by uneconomically low fees and 'sledge-hammer' regulation.



For example, the Association has consistently and successfully campaigned to persuade the Government to relax the retrospective application of environmental care standards on room and door sizes which would have resulted in the closure of many otherwise perfectly good nursing homes.

Campaigning through the news media

Many people's opinions about and attitudes towards nursing homes and health care generally are influenced by what they read in the newspaper, see on television or hear on the radio.

With this in mind, the RNHA issues dozens of news releases each year to the national, trade, regional and local news media across the UK. Its chief executive officer is regularly interviewed on radio and TV and invited to comment on major developments as they arise.

During 2002, for example, RNHA news releases dealt with issues

ranging from care standards to levels of fees paid by social services departments.

Where circumstances in a particular region or local authority area demand a strong public voice on behalf of nursing homes, the RNHA is always ready to mount a proactive media campaign to ensure a balanced debate in the columns of local newspapers and the current affairs programmes of local radio stations.

Copies of previous RNHA news releases may be found on and downloaded from its web site.

The RNHA's primary aims

- To work with individual nursing homes to ensure and maintain the highest standards of professional nursing care.
- To foster the happiness, dignity and well-being of all who need the services of a nursing home by promoting the concept of 'total individualised nursing care'.
- To defend and promote the interests of nursing homes.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and practical experience.
- To bring to the attention of Government the needs of all patients within registered nursing homes.
- To support the continuing education of RNHA members and their staff.

How the RNHA is run

Formed in 1968, the RNHA is an association run by its members for its members, all of whom are nursing home owners.

Its elected National Committee, led by a chairman and vice-chairman, determines overall policy, with individual committee members taking on responsibility for overseeing and driving forward particular activities. Members have the opportunity to influence policy through their local branches and by attending and voting at the annual general meeting.

A small head office team, led by the chief executive officer (himself a nursing home owner) implements policy and ensures continuity of service to members.

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