

# HomeVisit

News for supporters of the QNI

The charity dedicated to improving patient care by supporting nurses working in the community



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## Queen Camilla becomes Patron of the QNI



The Queen’s Nursing Institute is delighted that Her Majesty Queen Camilla has become the sixth royal Patron of the charity.

The appointment was confirmed in the first week of May, following the conclusion of the official

review of patronages by the Royal Household over the past year.

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, the QNI’s Chief Executive said, ‘I am delighted that Her Majesty Queen Camilla has agreed to become Patron of the Queen’s Nursing Institute (QNI), the charity that bears her title. Queen’s Nurses in England, Wales and Northern Ireland will I’m sure be honoured and encouraged by this news. We look forward to a warm and rewarding relationship with our new Patron who has shown herself as a passionate advocate for healthcare for people of all ages.’

Professor John Unsworth OBE, the QNI’s Chair of Council said, ‘The history of the QNI is inextricably linked with the Royal Family and its origin in Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee. This royal connection is as significant today as it was then, and its renewal this year is a historic moment. The Queen’s patronage of the QNI gives recognition to all nurses doing vital and demanding work in the community, in primary care and social care.’

## Five Priorities in Health and Social Care for the New Government

The QNI has published a list of five priorities that it believes are essential to address within the health and care system. As an independent charity dedicated to improving nursing care at home and in the community, the QNI highlights the importance of the registered nursing role for the benefit of the individuals, families and communities served.

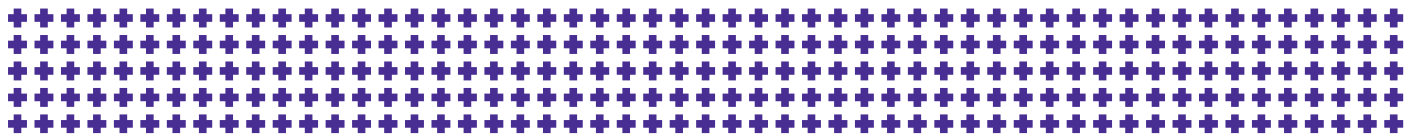
The five priority areas are:

1. Proactive management of long-term conditions to prevent unnecessary admission to hospital
2. Manage frailty and preventable deterioration amongst care home residents
3. A public health strategy to address health inequalities and the big issues faced by society
4. Improve end-of-life care for all ages

5. Access to services for people with mental health problems of all ages.

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, the QNI’s CEO said, ‘The QNI and the community nurses we work with have a wealth of experience in planning and delivering health services to people across the lifespan. Community nurses see the real effects of national policies - good and bad - on the health and wellbeing of the people they support and care for. The QNI’s priorities for government are based on this experience, and evidence collated from nurses at all levels in the health and care system. We look forward to working with the new government to help inform and design healthcare policies that are effective, fair and sustainable.’

To read the full document, go to: <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/news/five-priorities-in-health-and-social-care-for-the-new-government/>



## District Nursing Today: The Views of Team Leaders Revealed in QNI Report



The QNI has launched a major national survey of District Nurse Team Leaders. The new report was launched by the QNI's chief executive, Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, at the National District Nursing Network (NDNN) meeting held in London.

Qualification, a prescribing qualification, and an Advanced Clinical Assessment qualification.

However, the report shows that District Nursing services remain critically under-resourced, with multiple indicators that teams are struggling with capacity.

Dr Crystal Oldman commented, 'We have a growing and ageing population and this is having a profound impact on how health and social care must be planned and delivered: District Nurses are increasingly responsible for people living with very complex healthcare needs. The next government must work to boost the District Nursing services that deliver essential individual and population health in communities everywhere.'

Over 1500 District Nurse team leaders from all countries of the UK contributed to the report, through an online survey undertaken in 2023. The survey makes extensive comparison with data gathered in 2019, illustrating trends in the workforce since the Covid-19 pandemic. The report focuses on the demographic profile of the workforce, working practices and technology, education and professional development, and capacity in nursing teams. The analysis of the survey was overseen by Professor Alison Leary MBE, Director of the QNI's International Community Nursing Observatory (ICNO).

The report shows that District Nurse team leaders are carrying more responsibility than ever before, and this is increasingly reflected in the role being paid at Band 7 on the Agenda for Change scale.

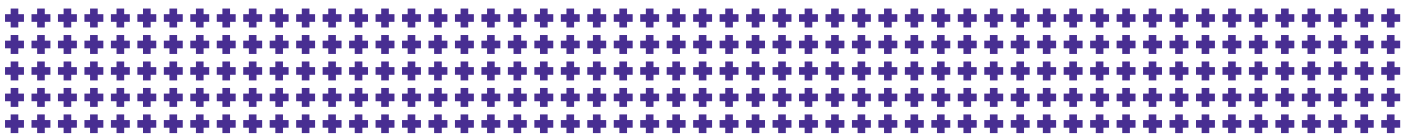
It also reveals that team leaders are responding to the increased complexity of their work by developing their knowledge, skills and qualifications when they have the opportunity. Team leaders are becoming more experienced and developing more advanced nursing skills in response to the greater level of complexity in the needs of the people they serve. More nurses now have the District Nurse Specialist Practitioner

'It is a testament to the District Nursing profession that many nurses are taking their education to the next level to address increasingly complex needs in the people they serve, but frustrating to see the barriers to accessing this. Without better access to the DNSPQ, this makes it difficult for nurses to plan their career paths. In 2023, the QNI launched its Field Specific Standards for District Nursing and these are now being used to develop courses that reflect an advanced level of practice. These courses reflect the real environment of District Nursing practice today, with all its challenges and opportunities.'

District Nursing is a highly valued, universal community service which is provided in every village, town and city. District Nurses, and by extension the individuals, families and communities they care for, are at the centre of the QNI's mission and values. They are also a core part of the National Health Service in the UK.

### Educational achievement and remuneration

There are more team leaders with the District Nurse Specialist Practitioner Qualification (DNSPQ) than when the survey was last carried



out in 2019. However, only half of respondents' employers required them to have a DNSPO qualification.

The number of team leaders without prescribing qualifications is falling; almost a third of team leaders (27.9%) in 2023 had a V300 qualification, compared to 18.5% in 2019.

The number of respondents paid at Band 7 on AFC scales has increased since 2019, while the number of those on Band 5 and 6 has decreased.

### Capacity Challenges

More teams are carrying bigger caseloads. Caseloads in the 101 to 200 range have fallen (20% in 2023, 24.8% in 2019) while those of 600 plus have gone up (16.2% in 2023, 11.5% in 2019). This may indicate that there are more large teams and fewer small ones than in 2019, as services have been reconfigured. It may also show that individual nurses have a bigger caseload.

The most common aspects of care not done or not undertaken to professional satisfaction due to capacity/workload issues were psychological care/support (43.3% of respondents), assessment (38.6% of respondents) and managing continence (30.8% of respondents).

### Workforce and conditions

Virtual wards and remote monitoring are having a growing impact: 46.2% stated that they had made no difference to workload, but almost a third (28%) stated that they had increased it. Only 4.5% believed that they had decreased workload.

Unpaid overtime was common. 43% of respondents are carrying out 4 to 7 hours unpaid overtime per week, 33.3% 1 to 3 hours, 15% 7 to 10 hours and 8.7% more than 10 hours per week.

There appear to be more band 3 and 4 staff including Nursing Associates in DN teams than in 2019.

More respondents in 2023 had access to parking permits. 39.8% of respondents had access to a car parking permit in the 2023, survey compared to 30.7% in the 2019 survey. However, 39.4% of respondents were not fully reimbursed for fuel costs.

### Recommendations

A sustainable financial investment in the District Nursing current and future workforce, combined with the removal of barriers that make staff recruitment and retention more difficult.

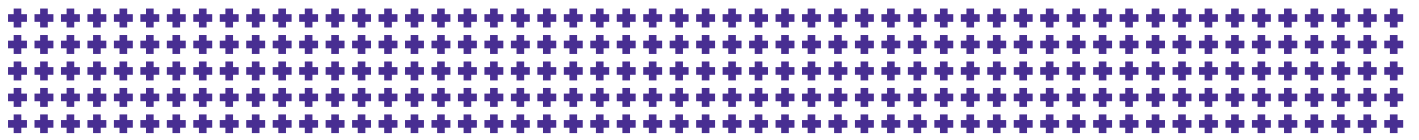
Clear support for the District Nursing Specialist Practitioner Qualification (DNSPO), including financial support for those who wish to take the qualification and a more clearly defined career path.

Coordinated efforts to address issues that make District Nursing less effective, particularly poor IT systems, out of date technology, and disjointed communication and referral.

Fairness of reward and management of the costs of delivering care – too many nurses work unpaid overtime and are subsidising their employers in other ways, for example vehicle expenses.

Many though not all of the concerns raised by District Nurse Team Leaders included in this report could be addressed by greater central government funding. Despite the numerous challenges described, district nurses remain absolutely committed to providing high-quality care to their patients. It is crucially important that the NHS and its constituent bodies continue to invest in district nursing services to ensure they have the resources required to meet the profound changes in individual and population need that are emerging in the 21st century.

To read the report in full, go to: <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/news/district-nursing-today-the-views-of-team-leaders-revealed-in-qni-report/>



## National Garden Scheme Wins Gold at Chelsea Flower Show



aromas in the company of special guests, enveloped in glorious weather, was like apples of gold in pictures of silver. NGS aptly deserve a Gold Medal.'

'It's a fantastic conclusion to months of planning. Working with the superlative team of Tom Stuart-Smith and Crocus has been hugely rewarding and the support from Project Giving Back has created a garden so worthy of Gold. It's overwhelming,' said National Garden Scheme CEO, George Plumptre.

It's a Gold for the National Garden Scheme (NGS) at RHS Chelsea!

The National Garden Scheme garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith, brought to life by Crocus and funded by Project Giving Back has won an RHS Gold Medal at this year's Chelsea Flower Show.

Kendra Schneller MBE, QN said: 'Incredibly honoured & thankful to be given the opportunity. The garden deserves Gold. It's so beautifully peaceful & tranquil. Such intricate detail, colour, positioning of flowers & trees, you feel like you're walking on air. Also very lovely to meet George Plumptre in person.'

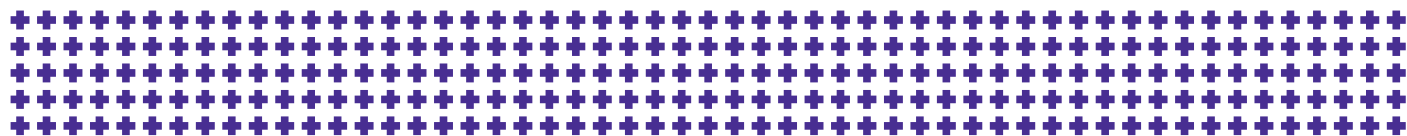
Fawn Bess-Leith QN said: 'Representing the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) and the National Garden Scheme at the world-famous Chelsea Flower Show was indeed a golden opportunity. The blend of vibrant colours and refreshing

'I'm very, very happy for everyone who has been involved in the garden. It's wonderful for the National Garden Scheme and wonderful for the Crocus team who have put all this together. The materials you're working with are so extraordinary that it's really nature and plants that ought to be congratulated,' said Tom Stuart-Smith.

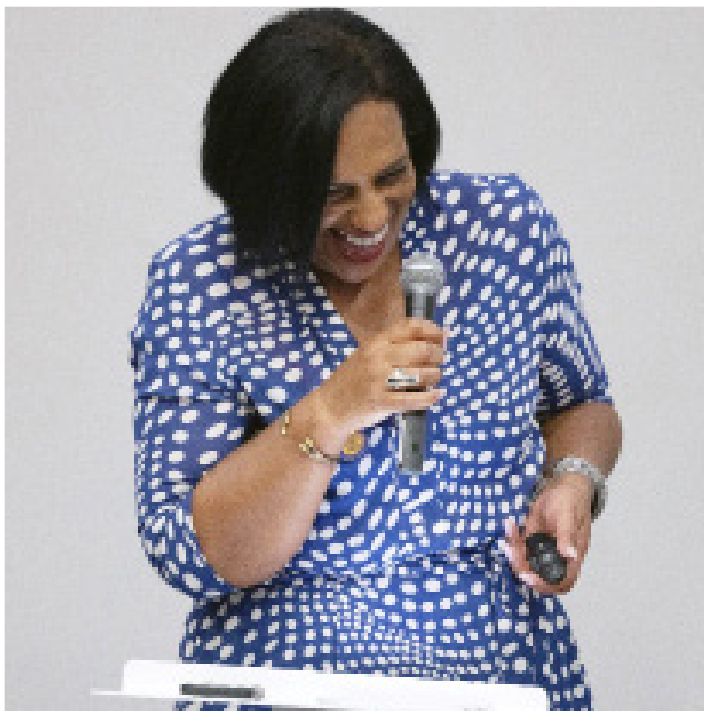
Special guests in the garden pictured above include, L-R, Dame Mary Berry, NGS President, Rachel de Thame, NGS Ambassador, a Chelsea Pensioner, Arit Anderson, NGS Trustee, Queen's Nurses Kendra Schneller and Fawn Bess-Leith, Alan Titchmarsh, a Chelsea Pensioner, Tom Stuart-Smith.

The garden with its woodland edge planting and artisan hut will be thrilling the public on main avenue and across the BBC coverage in the week ahead.

For the full story, visit the National Garden Scheme website: [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk).



## William Rathbone X Annual Award and Lecture 2024



The William Rathbone X Annual Lecture and Award Ceremony were held at London South Bank University on 10th May 2024. The prestigious annual event was attended by national and regional nursing leaders in practice, government and education, and hosted by Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, QNI Chief Executive, and Dr Rebecca Myers, representing the Council of the QNI.

### Annual Lecture

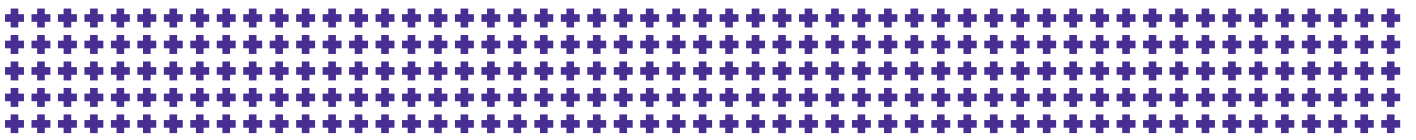
The William Rathbone X Annual Lecture was given by Michelle Cox, Queen's Nurse and Race Equality Consultant on the theme of 'Healing the Scars: Community Nursing in Liverpool amidst the Legacy of Slavery and Discrimination.'

Michelle has 30 years experience in the NHS, and 26 years as a registered nurse. Michelle has a particular interest in health inequalities. As a black nurse she has shone a light on issues affecting not just black communities and ethnic minorities, in her home city of Liverpool, but has led on a number of national programmes to elevate understandings

around Equality Diversity and Inclusion ensuring that challenges are addressed, and learning embedded throughout NHS organisations.

Ms Cox's lecture was a wide ranging and profound synthesis of the history of slavery and its connection with Liverpool, and how the legacy of slavery is still impacting on the lives of black people in the UK today. She offered a challenge to the audience, to NHS England, and the Queen's Nursing Institute, to commit to deeper understanding and actions to embed anti-racism in their culture and operations.

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, the QNI's Chief Executive said, 'Michelle delivered the most engaging, informative and powerful lecture I have ever had the privilege of experiencing – every member of the audience on Friday will have learned something significant to take back to their workplace. I spoke with delegates who were so profoundly moved that they planned to take immediate action within their own organisations. The



commitment of the QNI to become an anti-racist organisation is unwavering. We are on a journey; we have much work to do and we have been helped enormously by Michelle. It is not for the QNI to call ourselves an anti-racist organisation; we must be judged by others in our words and in our actions.

### Presentation of Award

The William Rathbone X Annual Award for Excellence in the Executive Nurse Leadership of Community Nursing Services 2024 is one of the most prestigious awards offered by the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI).

The QNI recognises the necessity of excellent leadership at a strategic level in the delivery of excellent nursing care in the community. This annual award provides the recognition of the impact of excellent strategic nursing leadership, support for staff and the consequent positive outcomes for patient experiences in the delivery of community nursing services.

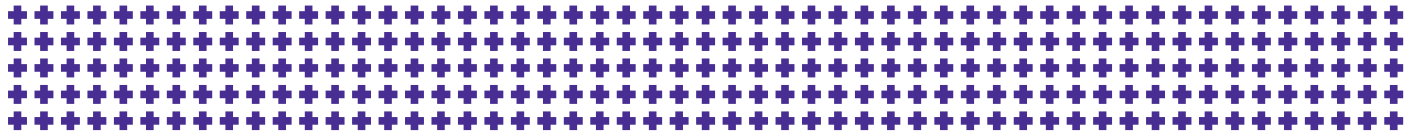
Seven eligible nominations were received, from chief executives of community healthcare provider organisations. The history of the Award and the seven nominees were introduced by QNI Council member Dr

Rebecca Myers.

The Award was presented to Suzanne Mumford, Chief Nurse of Care UK, by Mr Nick Addyman, QNI trustee and son-in-law of the late Mr Rathbone. The nomination described Suzanne as 'a visible role model to nursing and care colleagues, supporting a consistent and sustainable approach that embeds evidence-based practice.'

Dr Crystal Oldman commented, 'The William Rathbone X award provides an opportunity to celebrate all those shortlisted – each one of them outstanding in their leadership of community nursing services. The winner, Suzanne Mumford, is responsible for over 9000 beds in nursing and residential homes and it was a pleasure to see a senior nurse from the Adult Social Care Nursing sector win the award. Social Care is sometimes overlooked as part of community nursing services and yet they provide care and support for more than six times the number of hospital beds at any one time. My congratulations to all the nominees and to Suzanne.'

Further information is online here: <https://qni.org.uk/news-and-events/events/william-rathbone-x-annual-award-lecture/>



# New Network for General Practice Nurses Launched



Programmes (Primary Care). Angie Hack has a background in District Nursing and General Practice Nurse education, at London South Bank University. She has also served as Chair of the Association of Academic General Practice Nurse Educators (AAGPNE) since the organisation was formed in 2016.

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, Chief Executive of the QNI said, 'We are delighted to have created this new network exclusively for General Practice Nurses supported by a grant from the National Garden Scheme, for which we are extremely grateful. This crucial group of nurses has historically not been given the recognition they deserve, which has impacted their morale.

**T**he QNI has launched a new professional network for General Practice Nurses (GPNs).

The new network - funded by the National Garden Scheme - was announced at the celebration event for General Practice Nurses held at Regent's College in London on 12th July. Almost 500 GPNs signed up online to join the network on the day.

GPNs can join the network with a simple online registration form. The network will hold regular webinars, the first on 3rd September. Members will also receive a regular e-newsletter. There is no fee to join the network and it's open to GPNs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The aim of this 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
- for headspace for learning and time to collaborate with other GPNs to raise the profile and voice of General Practice Nursing.

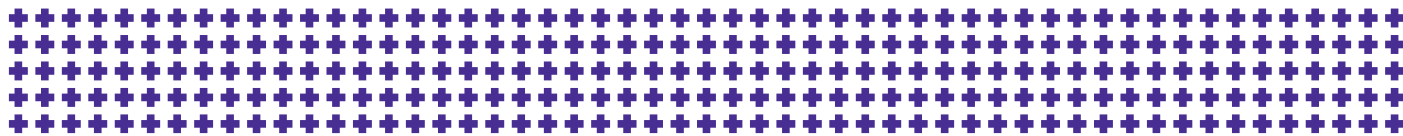
The network is led by Queen's Nurse Angie Hack, the QNI's Assistant Director of Nursing

However we know that local communities place huge value on their GPNs and the support that they give to individuals, families and carers. We know that with this free network, they will find an inclusive, supportive and much needed space that allows them to share ideas, best practice and advice.'

Nurses working in General Practice are also encouraged to look out for the next round of QNI innovation projects, the NGS Elsie Wagg Innovation Scholarships. The QNI in partnership with the National Garden Scheme will fund five projects that use gardens and gardening to improve the health of people in the community. The projects must be led by nurses, and many GPNs have previously been successful project leaders. The scholarship offers a year long programme of professional development, as well as funding to put nurses' ideas into action. The scheme is now in its fourth successful year, and has helped thousands of people to access the health benefits of being outside in green spaces. The scholarships will open for applications in September, for projects starting in spring 2025.

Find out more here: <https://qni.org.uk/networks-for-community-nurses/general-practice-nurse-network/>





## The Power of Therapeutic Gardens to Change Lives



Neurologist Oliver Sacks wrote of ‘the pure and intense joy, a blessing, to feel the sun on my face and the wind in my hair, to hear birds, to see, touch and fondle the living plants. Some essential connection and communion with nature was re-established,’ upon leaving hospital after a spell of several weeks. He used to take his patients for walks in the New York Botanical Garden, sensing the ‘calming and organizing effects on the brain.’ For patients with spinal cord injury in the UK, there are beautiful vibrant gardens within NHS spinal centres, nurturing hope, recovery and relationships.

### Planting the seed

Horatio Chapple was a young man who dreamed of becoming a doctor and who volunteered at the Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre in Salisbury, where he saw the frustration, and devastation, of spinal cord injury. Sensing that an immersive garden, and an escape from the scrubs and smells of the hospital environment, could improve wellbeing, he began fundraising for what he called ‘The Jubilee Garden’ to celebrate 25 years of the spinal centre.

Tragically Horatio died in 2011, at the age of 17, on a science trip to Svalbard in the Arctic, when a polar bear attacked his camp. But his seed of an idea for a therapeutic garden had been planted and has since been nourished and cultivated by

his mother, Dr Olivia Chapple OBE, founder of the charity Horatio’s Garden.

Horatio’s Garden, like the QNI, is now one of the beneficiary charities of the National Garden Scheme, which raises millions of pounds for nursing and health charities every year.

### Bearing fruit

In 2012, the designer Cleve West created Horatio’s Garden South West on what was otherwise to become a car park at the Duke of Cornwall Spinal Treatment Centre in Salisbury. Since then, the charity has

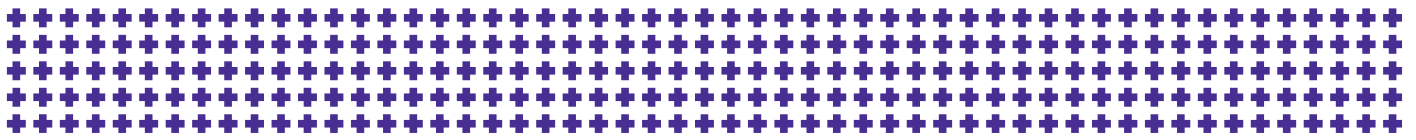
opened beautiful and biodiverse gardens in Stoke Mandeville, the Midlands, London (Stanmore), Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Horatio’s Garden Sheffield & East is currently being built and is due to open in 2025, and it is the charity’s vision to grow these gardens in all 11 NHS spinal injury centres in the UK.

Each garden is the brainchild of a different celebrated designer. RHS Chelsea Gold Medal Winner and presenter of BBC Gardeners’ World Joe Swift was the leading designer for Horatio’s Garden Stoke Mandeville, the home of wheelchair sport. He calls it the most important garden he has ever designed, knowing that it would affect hundreds of patients, their families and friends.

### In full bloom

A kaleidoscope of colour awaits in Horatio’s Gardens; asters, geraniums and irises take centre stage alongside *Ajuga incisa* ‘Blue Enigma’, *Epimedium* ‘Amber Queen’, *Penstemon digitalis* ‘Dark Towers’ and, of course, *Aruncus* ‘Horatio’ and the specially bred, cream coloured ‘Horatio’s Garden Rose’.

Water features at wheelchair height and vibrant, layered planting ensure a multisensory experience. Whether in beds or wheelchairs, patients can grow and cultivate their own herbs, vegetables



and flowers in accessible greenhouses or raised planters – or play boccia, the Paralympic sport, in Horatio’s Garden Northern Ireland.

Mostly though, the gardens are a place to simply be, in a world dominated by doing. Secluded areas and light, homely ‘garden rooms’ allow for contemplation and conversation, with volunteers on hand to listen over a cup of tea, offering over 13,000 hours of time each year for patients, visitors and plants alike.

For me, it’s the peace that the garden gave my mind. Time to breathe, be away from the chaos of the ward and to be happy.

### **Gardening the mind**

‘It’s a physical injury but a psychological battle,’ says Dr Olivia Chapple, reflecting on spinal cord injury. Hospitalised for months, or even a year, patients with spinal cord injuries are more likely than the general population to experience depression, anxiety or PTSD.

‘Horatio’s Garden is the thing that has kept me sane. I can feel the tension going out of my body whenever I come here. The garden has made a massive difference to me,’ said one visitor.

‘For me, it’s the peace that the garden gave my mind. Time to breathe, be away from the chaos of the ward and to be happy,’ said Lowrie, injured after a fall.

91% of patients report that Horatio’s Garden improves their mental health. Sometimes, gardens and nature can be more powerful than any medication. ‘The garden looks after us,’ said horticulturist Monty Don. It’s not only the natural environment that nurtures the body, mind and soul in a Horatio’s Garden: an enhanced arts programme, comprising everything from photography to watercolour painting, willow weaving, glass fusing and creative writing, and live music performances, are offering headspace and an opportunity for physical rehabilitation and to learn new skills.

### **Talking trees**

Did you know that trees can communicate disease and distress to each other through underground fungal networks? German forester and author of ‘The Hidden Life of Trees: What they feel, how they communicate’ Peter Wohlleben, suggests they send silent messages of alarm to each other through chemical, hormonal, and slow-pulsing electrical signals. (It’s less clear what messages they send to their neighbours when they feel content.)

In Horatio’s Gardens there are times to talk, perhaps also to communicate distress, or simply to share family life – and times to be silent, reflect and just be still.

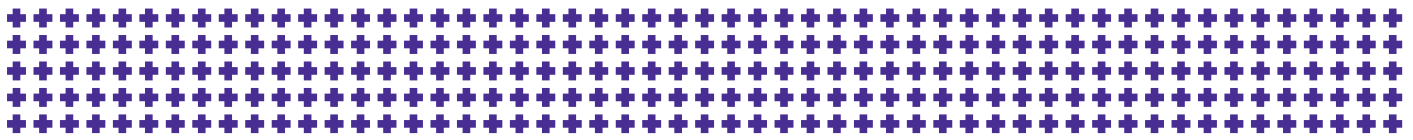
‘It’s wonderful for visitors to come to a joyful garden. Spending time as a family together in Horatio’s Garden makes visiting a much happier occasion,’ says Rory. ‘The kids really love the garden too, as they get to run around and play on their scooters.’ Others value tranquillity and peace – perhaps, like trees, needing no words. ‘Just being able to chill outside and watch the birds having fun in the water features has been great. It’s simple, but it’s something I’ll always remember,’ says Chloe.

### **Best in show**

In 2020, Olivia Chapple won the prestigious RHS Carew Pole Award for contribution to horticulture by a non-horticulturist. In 2023, Horatio’s Garden Chelsea, designed by Harris Bugg Studio, became the first fully accessible garden to win ‘Best in Show’ and a Gold medal at Chelsea. If you want to give your own garden a medal-winning make-over, and nurture your wellbeing too, monthly blogs from the Head Gardeners can teach you how to harden off your seedlings in spring, before pricking out, potting on and much more. Or better still, experience the escapism for yourself at a Horatio’s Garden, perhaps through volunteering, attending a private garden tour or visiting via the National Garden Scheme.

Helen Cowan RN

*Author Helen Cowan is a community nurse who has experienced first-hand the impact of Horatio’s Gardens, visiting with her husband, who has lived with spinal injury since 1981.*



## Putting Young Carers on the Map



It was a dull wet day when Tom and Sara, Young Adult Carers, joined me at Manchester Metropolitan University to present at 2024 International Young Carers Conference – Eurocarers. It would take more than inclement weather to dampen our spirits after months of planning and preparing. Today was the day, our day, to present at the 4th International Young Carers Conference.

Together with Andrea and Alice – School Nurses and Queen’s Nurses from Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust – final preparations were completed to share their excellent QNI Innovation Project – My Young Carer Health Journal.

We eagerly prepared for the arrival of our audience. The room was soon full of delegates from around the world including a group of young carers. I wondered what they would think of our presentation: Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Young Carers through Coproduction.

The time flew by and before we knew it were receiving a rapturous round of applause! The delegates were smiling and so were we whilst breathing a huge sigh of relief. We received positive feedback and I’ll never forget the words: ‘that was phenomenal!’ and ‘I wish I had had that when at school’. Our work was commended and had gained interest. We had achieved our aim.

### Planning and evaluation

Planning had been key for the event in the months, weeks and days before.

My list:

- Agreeing presentation content
- Rehearsing our presentation
- Presentation skills session from QNI CEO Dr Crystal Oldman CBE
- Working with QNI comms team
- Book hotels, trains and taxis

But as Young Adult Carers Tom and Sara had an additional list:

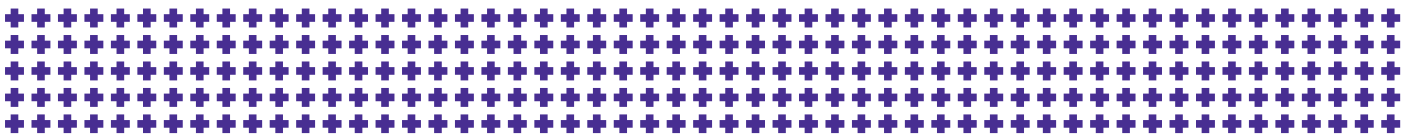
- Dispense and package a couple of doses of medication
- Prepare food and drinks
- Empty, clean and prepare commode
- Catch up with Dad
- See Mum
- Plan time off work

This was a first experience for all of us presenting at an international conference. We were excited and nervous in equal measures, recognising the opportunity to share our work to raise awareness of Young Carers and shine a light on coproduction, community nursing and the QNI.

Evaluation of the day was as important as the planning and delivering of the presentation. Meeting up in our usual coffee shop recently, Tom and Sara shared their thoughts: ‘Overall, it was a good experience presenting to people from across the world. The diversity of the people was good. It helped us with our presenting skills, a different audience with global participants. It was memorable. An afternoon session would be better. The scale of the venue... wow! This type of experience doesn’t happen very often. Yes, we would like to do it again.’

On personal reflection, the experience was brilliant. The opportunity to network internationally, share practice and enable both Tom and Sara and fellow QNs Alice and Andrea the opportunity to present at an international conference and put Young Carers on the map was a proud moment. And yes, I too would like to do it again!

*Fiona Rogers QN*



## Celebrating Learning Disability Awareness Week



As we celebrated Learning Disability Awareness week 2024 it was important to reflect on this year's theme 'Do you see me?' and consider what that really means for people diagnosed with a learning disability, their families, and the learning disability nurses who strive to offer person centred care to individuals across a wide range of settings.

It is estimated that 2.5% of our population have a learning disability which equates to 1.5 million adults and children across England. Within the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT) we provide a range of learning disability services from community, respite, and inpatient services and therefore there are a range of diverse roles that our learning disability nurses hold.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Community learning disability nurses for children and adults working to improve health, and address both physical and mental health inequalities.
- Acute liaison and health facilitation nurses to ensure smooth pathways, ensuring reasonable adjustments are made, the mental capacity act is adhered to, staff are educated around the needs of people with a learning disability, supporting the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training, and addressing health inequalities and improving health outcomes.
- Specialist health respite and day services.
- Intensive support teams with nurses working alongside the community teams and transforming care teams to support individuals with complex behavioural and mental health needs to prevent hospital admissions.
- The FACCT (Forensic Assessment

Consultation Training Team) supporting individuals at risk of being or currently involved with the criminal justice system.

- A specialist epilepsy nurse working to educate staff and working with complex cases.
- Inpatient nurses working with children and adults often

subject to the mental health act in specialist assessment and treatment service or low and medium secure services.

- Specialist neurodiversity roles, in our autism and ADHD services
- Nurses working as commissioners in the transforming care services with people at risk of hospital admission or about to be discharged from hospital back to the community.

We also have learning disability nurses in senior leadership roles, such as matrons, heads of nursing, associate director of nursing, assistant director of nursing and our current CEO is a learning disability nurse!

We're incredibly proud to be able to have such a diverse range of Learning Disability nurses in our ranks. And on the theme of 'Do you see me?', I hope that our continued work to have Learning Disability nurses across our range of services helps to ensure that more people going into nursing will consider if there is something for them in the wide spectrum of learning disability services.

Throughout the week our teams welcomed clients and service users at open events which showcased some of the Art Therapy work they and their peers had created. People created art on the theme of 'this is me', and we manned several information stands around Warwickshire, Coventry, and Solihull. We also commissioned a service user who is a graffiti artist to paint two murals at Brooklands Hospital.

*Cathy Watt, Head of Nursing – Community learning disability and autism, at Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trusts.*



## Receiving my British Empire Medal



I received my invitation in the post to a service of dedication for the most excellent Order of the British Empire at St Paul's Cathedral on the 15th May. I was surprised and excited all at the same time. So the planning began: new dress, fascinator, shoes and I booked the train up to London.

The morning of the 15th of May arrived and I headed to the station with my Medal of the British Empire, Queen's Nurse badge and fascinator in my bag.

The train was on time and I arrived at City Thames Link station the nearest station to St Paul's. I made for the toilets where I pinned my medal and badge on and fixed my fascinator in my hair, because I thought it was a little ostentatious to

wear them on the train. I was not the only person doing this; two other ladies were doing the same. We walked the six minutes to St Paul's and joined the long queue to get through the security.

While in the queue I talked to a lot of very inspiring people; from a Dame who was also an MP to a gentleman who worked to improve relations with Japan and he spoke Japanese. Many people spoke to me and asked about my Queen's Nurse badge which was lovely.

I arrived at the Severn Cathedral and was given the order of service and shown to my seat, which was in the circle under the main dome of the cathedral; rows from the King and Queen.

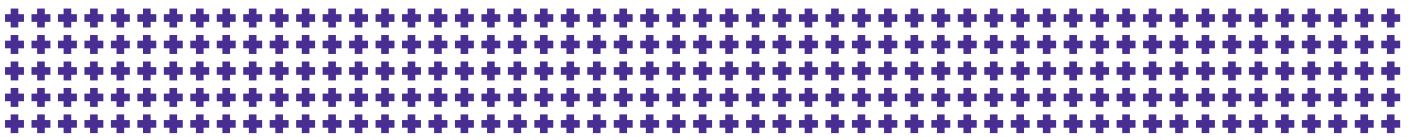
The trumpets sounded a fanfare and I saw a large sword being carried in front of the King and Queen. Once they had walked up the main aisle they were seated and the sword was placed in front of them.

The Yeoman of the guard made a circle around us and the King and Queen. The service was full of pomp and ceremony. I had to keep reminding myself I was there.

The sermon was very relevant as the Dean spoke about Florence Nightingale and having your feet on the ground at all times. That she changed a lot of things some momentous, some small and that every change and improvement helps no matter how large or small.

The whole experience will remain with me forever, it was a privilege, honour and humbling to be among so many people who have achieved so much in their lives.

*Hazel Nelson QN*



## Moonwalk 2024



On Saturday 18th May 2024, Queen's Nurses Sharon Lee and Sara-Jane Kray from Kent and Medway undertook the London Moonwalk overnight for Breast Cancer, a charity very close to both of our hearts.

It was the 26th London Moonwalk, and over the years has raised over £139 million, for such an amazing cause. At the start of the walk this year alone the charity had raised £2.3 million of which Sharon and Sara had collectively raised just over £1,000.

The 26.2-mile walk takes place through the streets of London with many iconic places lit up in pink. Both Sharon and Sara completed the full walk in approximately 8 hours (through the night without sleep!!).

Prior to the walk, Sara put a message on the Facebook page for Queen's Nurses to let fellow Queen's Nurses know and was able to meet up with Michelle Mitchell from Wales twice during the walk. Michelle completed the half marathon and then went on to volunteer for the rest of

the night whilst Sharon and Sara continued to complete the full marathon.

The experience was just amazing and whilst Sharon was very stiff for a few days afterwards it was worth every ache. Sara was fine and continued to see the sights of London the next few days (on foot).

This was Sara's third time completing the walk (the first time was in 2019 in a collective East Kent CCG group of which 16 staff members took part), and Sharon's first time, but she had completed the London Marathon many years ago so had a rough idea of what to expect in terms of the preparation and training.

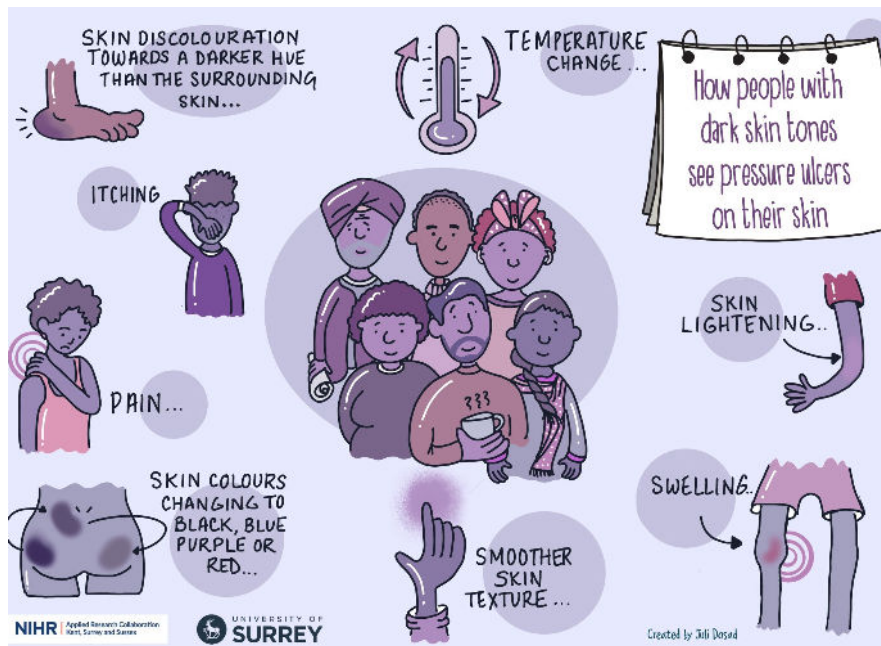
We were all dressed up for the occasion and Sharon had her wings on, which carried a picture of a colleague who sadly passed away from breast cancer, to honour her memory.

For more information about the moonwalk please see <https://walkthewalk.org/about-us>

*Sharon Lee and Sara-Jane Kray, Queen's Nurses*



## Identifying Pressure Injuries Earlier in Dark Skin Tones



people with dark skin tones. For example, participants often identified skin discoloration towards a darker hue as a primary indicator of a potential pressure injury. This contrasts with the signs recognised in people with light skin tones, such as redness, highlighting the need to assess skin tones to accurately identify pressure injuries.

These findings resulted in an infographic being created (see left) to represent the early signs of pressure damage expressed by participants. This lays the foundations for the development of patient-informed educational strategies for nurses

QNI Council Member Dr Neesha Oozageer Gunowa and her colleagues have published vital research which supports the early identification of pressure injuries in people with dark skin tones.

Significant health inequities remain in the diagnosis of skin conditions in people with dark skin tones. This is particularly evident for pressure injuries, where Dr Oozageer Gunowa has found people with darker skin tones are more likely to develop higher stage pressure injuries. As this stems from a lack of inclusivity in research and education, Dr Oozageer Gunowa and her colleagues Dr Kwame Adomako Oti and Professor Debra Jackson have published a new qualitative study which addresses this issue and offers a path forward for improved care and outcomes.

Through twenty-two interviews, the study explored the personal experiences and perceptions of community-based patients with dark skin tones and their carers, regarding pressure injuries. Patients included those receiving care from community nurses for pressure area management, or who were identified as having a high risk for developing pressure injuries.

One of the most important findings of the study was that it clearly presented how early-stage pressure damage is identified differently among

and other healthcare professionals, to allow the earlier identification of pressure injuries in dark skin tones.

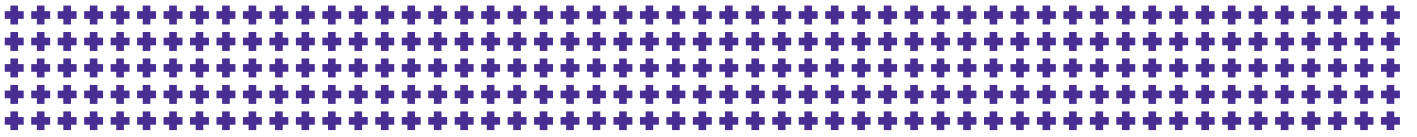
Dr Oozageer Gunowa commented, 'While we are incredibly proud to contribute to the body of knowledge in this vital area, it is with a sense of regret that I acknowledge this is the first time such a critical topic has been explored and researched. This study sheds light on the unique challenges faced by individuals with dark skin tones in the early identification and management of pressure injuries, providing valuable insights from both patients and their carers. It is our hope that these findings will pave the way for further research and lead to significant improvements in healthcare practices and outcomes for this often-overlooked population.'

This study serves as a call to action to incorporate skin tone assessment into nursing education and practice, and is a vital step towards addressing health inequities and improving care for people with dark skin tones.

Read more here:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jocn.17362>;

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28887872/>



## KPOW! Know the Power of Words



**K**POW!, which stands for 'Know the Power of Words', is a play exploring the importance of language used when diagnosing and treating patients living with cancer. The play stars Allyson Kent, a Queen's Nurse, who was diagnosed with cancer in 2019 and is now a Cancer Alliance patient representative.

The play features four friends who discuss their personal experiences of cancer and share how the actions and words of healthcare staff had a

powerful effect on their feelings and thoughts. From experiences of feeling invisible and hearing comments like 'if you are viable', they explore examples of when words have had a negative impact on their emotions.

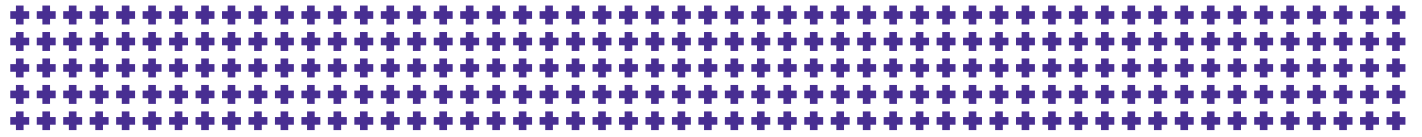
The friends contrast this with examples of words which have had a positive effect, such as staff introducing themselves with a smile and offering to look at all the

possibilities for them. This play serves as an important reminder to deliver words in a sensitive and positive way.

The play received its premiere on Monday 8th July.

**Watch it here:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=verXuKHUdtk>





## Retired QN Eva Firth's Special Day



**R**etired QN Eva Firth celebrated her 100th birthday on 6th July. Staff at the care home in Yorkshire where Eva now lives made sure that her special day went well.

Eva's family put out albums showcasing some of the wonderful needlework she has done over her

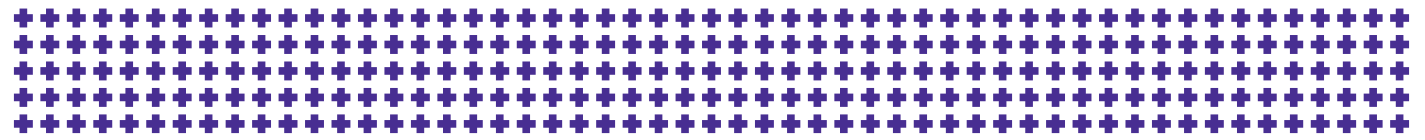
life, and of her various contributions to her local community, including buying her GP practice a defibrillator. Eva was a district nurse in Yorkshire for many years. When she retired Eva enrolled herself on a senior's computer course at the local library.

Eva's eldest niece had intended to 'drop in' from Canada a couple of days before her birthday - sadly this plan was foiled as she got as far as Ireland and caught a virus, so was unable to make it at the last minute. On the actual day family and friends visited throughout the day – Eva was delighted that so many of her family and friends travelled so far to see her.

The local Mayor also visited, and presented Eva with a beautiful vase engraved with the Borough coat of arms, and a birthday card from the King. The Mayor told Eva that meeting her had been an inspiration.

Eva received lovely flowers and cards for her birthday, and a special cake in the form of a needlework basket.

Eva is pictured with the Mayor as they are about to cut the cake.



## Tribute to David Pugh, QN by Dr Crystal Oldman CBE, QNI CEO



had an opportunity to speak and that the discussion was brought to a really collegiate and productive conclusion. This was one of David's many skills. He concluded the meeting as a roomful of advocates, all pulling in the same direction. And this was all done with David's skilled chairing, his wonderful smile, his beautiful Welsh lilt, and his calm and totally professional approach to managing a meeting, to bring consensus.

From that moment, I knew David was very special.

I went on to have the pleasure of getting to know David over

It is an absolute honour to be asked to write a few words about David.

I remember very clearly my first meeting with David 11 years ago, one cold, wet spring day in a small hotel in Camden in London, where he was chairing the National District Nurse Network meeting. He had recently taken over as Chair and had advised me by email the week before the meeting, that the group was very concerned about the drop in District Nursing numbers, and would be putting me under the spotlight to interrogate me about actions the QNI were taking about the decline.

I had only been a few weeks in the job and was still finding my feet. I was terrified going into the meeting and thought I would be eaten alive.

But when I got there, David could not have been more helpful. He welcomed me into the room with a warm smile and facilitated the discussion brilliantly, ensuring that everyone

the years and I always looked forward to seeing him – he never failed to make me feel welcome and valued at NDNN meetings as he did with everyone. He also never failed to make me laugh and smile at those meetings - and he became my 'go to' expert Queen's Nurse for all matters related to District Nursing.

David's nursing career was an inspiration to all. His collaborative and collegiate approach was warmly appreciated by all who worked with him. His work in chairing the National District Nursing Network for more than a decade has made a huge impact on the whole of the District Nursing profession.

He grew the network from the handful of member organisations I saw at that meeting in Camden, to a roomful of 60 or more from all over the UK attending regular meetings; and through his work, commitment and determination, the profile, voice and strength of the National District Nurse Network in influencing community nursing policy, grew year on year.



The sharing and learning the network has enabled, under David's leadership, has left a legacy of nationwide improvement of nursing care in the community. The majority of this work was done in David's own time, on top of a very busy senior nursing role.

I also had the absolute honour to see David regularly at other national nursing meetings and QNI events. He was the kindest, most modest human being; full of integrity, and a hugely committed nurse and district nurse. His highly skilled leadership and his professional, evidence-based influence has shaped the future of District Nursing across the UK, for decades to come.

In July last year David was recognised by the Nursing Times as one of the 75 nurses who had shaped the NHS in its 75-year history – an enormous accolade and one we were delighted about at the QNI, because David never, ever shouted about his national work with government and professional bodies – nor his fantastic achievements for the nursing profession.

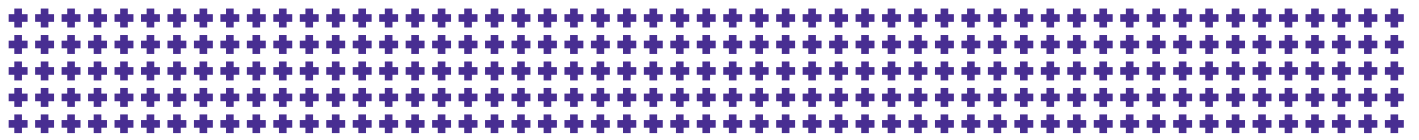
Earlier in 2023, David was nominated by the QNI Council for The Queen Mother, The Queen Elizabeth Award for Outstanding Service, an

award that is only given to a maximum of 5 nurses every year. Knowing that he was very unwell, David was awarded his certificate – signed by Dame Elizabeth Anionwu, the QNI Vice President - in March last year in his offices in Bristol, where I think the whole of Sirona Health arrived to see him, to celebrate with him and to applaud him – he was so loved and respected by his colleagues.

David was exceptional as a nurse and a human being. I get to meet a lot of nurses in my role at the QNI and I know exceptional when I see it. David's positivity, his humour, his professional expertise, his love of nursing and District Nursing, made us all want to be better at what we do as nurses, but above all, he made us feel a little lighter and brighter after we came away from being with him.

As the civil rights activist Maya Angelou said: 'People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel'.

Thank you David.



## Olive H. Evans 26/6/27 - 2/4/24



Olive was born in June 1927 in a village in the Conwy Valley of Caernarvonshire, North Wales.

A redhead, she was the 7th (of 10) child of May, a Rector's daughter who had been a Red Cross Nurse in WW1, and her widower husband Edward Roberts, 12 years her senior. 'I asked Mama why I was called Olive. She said she was running out of names'.

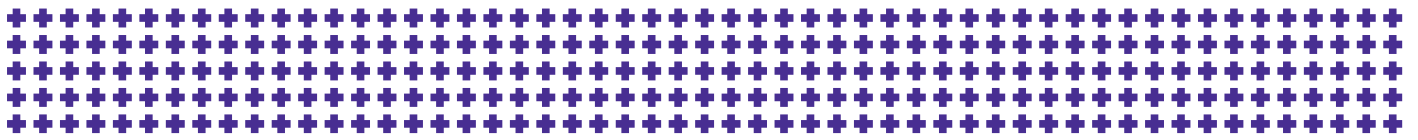
May was also step-mother to her husband's 5 children from his first marriage (the wife had died when the 5th child was in infancy). Victorian parents had no idea about contraception and Olive's mother was forever pregnant or with a babe in arms, and she brought up this large family.

Disaster struck when her father's butcher's business was washed away, and 16 people in the village drowned when the dam above the village of Dolgarrog burst during the night of 2 November 1925, plunging the family into poverty, which worsened in the Great Depression of the 1930s. The family had to contend with tragedy when they all contracted diphtheria, a disease of poverty, ('we filled a ward at the cottage hospital and only Leonard and I, both redheads, didn't get it') and two of her sisters, Mary and

Marina, aged 5 and 6, died within a week of each other, and a second set of twins was sadly stillborn; she refused to go to a funeral again for most of the rest of her life, only attending those of two older close relatives in the early 1980s (under duress, as the only local family) and her husband's. She also lost an elder stepbrother, Edgar, in the Battle for Normandy in 1944, and remembers her sobbing mother receiving the telegram saying he had been lost in action.

The family moved to Trefriw, where they enjoyed home grown vegetables, eggs from their hens, and sometimes during the war surreptitiously ate lamb from carcasses illegally slaughtered for local farmers and butchered by her father. Olive said they always had sufficient to eat, but a school photo shows the children looking rather thin. Clothes were hand-me-downs, or sent by relatives in the USA. Olive learned to darn and repair clothes, which she continued to do all her life – she could not sit still and relax and had to darn or iron whilst watching TV. She enjoyed helping her favourite brother Leonard with his paper round.

Olive was altruistic and had a very high pain threshold. As a child she fell out of a tree and broke her wrist but did not tell her parents, as she knew they could not afford the doctor's fee



(in the pre-NHS days before the war). The Colles fracture of her wrist deformed her arm.

The family spoke English at home but Olive learned Welsh at school – she was bright with plenty of common sense, and excelled in maths.

Having spent a lot of time with local genteel spinsters, the Misses Bibby, (for whom her older sister Edna was maid) ‘ playing Mah Jong and drinking green china tea’ and amusing them, Olive learned there was more to life than living in a village. Her schooling was interrupted by the arrival of wartime evacuees from Liverpool, and with the family needing money she had left school at 15 before taking her school certificate.

As she had a caring nature, helping with her younger siblings she went to be a mother’s help for the village policeman’s wife struggling with newborn twins. She then went to be nanny, and had her first ever outing to London on the day that was coincidentally D-day (6 June 1944) with the capital teeming with soldiers .

Olive had to sit an entrance exam for nursing training at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, which she passed and thus began her career. She enjoyed studying, loved nursing and was a natural. Having gained her State Registration in 1950 she then progressed to studying midwifery, enjoying doing home deliveries in Bourneville.

She described delivering undiagnosed twins to a poor mother, putting the babies in a makeshift cot in a drawer. In 1951 she was a State Certified Midwife and delivered about 100 babies, cycling to each patient. (Decades later, watching the first series of Call The Midwife she said it was *deja vu*, ‘that was me, it was just like that’). By 1954 she was a Queen’s Nurse (pioneering district nurse) in London.

Inspired by her Aunt Dell, who had nursed in the USA after WW1, she resigned from her Queen’s

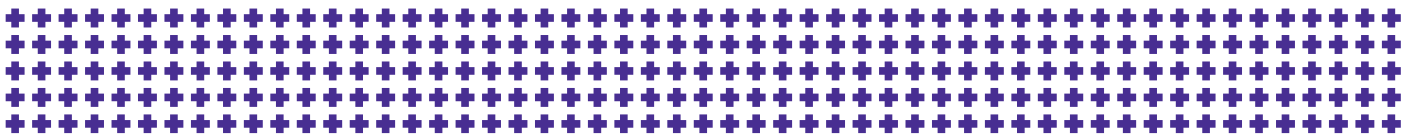
nursing job in 1956 and went to the USA, staying with her maternal Uncle Bob Williams in New Jersey. He later became President Gerald Ford’s personal physician at The White House. Olive studied Psychiatric Nursing and qualified, loving the work and life and she became lifelong best friends with a nurse called Marilyn who came from a farm in Iowa. Olive began the process for citizenship then was reluctantly coerced into returning to Britain with her sister, who had followed in her footsteps nursing in the USA.

Olive moved to London and a nursing friend introduced her to a Welshman called Meirion Holliday Evans – Holli to his English friends who couldn’t pronounce Meirion – and after a short courtship they were married on 21st October 1961 – Trafalgar Day – and honeymooned in Cornwall. Olive had to give up her beloved nursing career when she married Meirion. They lived in an attic flat above her father-in-law’s house in London SE4, where Olive gave birth to Cheryl in 1962, and Rupert two years later.

Having budgeted and saved every spare penny for three years, Olive and Meirion bought their first home in London SE23, where Erica was born in 1966 and the family lived for ten years. Olive looked after Erica, allowing Meirion to continue his career as a Headmaster.

Olive was a proud housewife, good at budgeting with her housekeeping money and keeping the family smart, clean and well fed. She never learned to drive, and over the years cared for a succession of elderly relatives (including her father-in-law and six weeks 24 hour end-of-life domiciliary care for her own mother).

Hobbies: tennis (she LOVED watching Wimbledon and once attended when she was nursing in London); dancing (jive – taught by GIs, and then ballroom); gardening and going to jumble sales.



In 1972, and after the death of Olive's father-in-law, the family moved to West Sussex. With all three children attending school, Olive was able to relax a bit more and tend their third acre garden near a tennis club. Olive no longer played tennis (and was disappointed Cheryl was far more interested in horses than tennis!) though was a huge fan and everything stopped for the fortnight when Wimbledon was on - she loved every moment of the matches.

The family moved to Littlehampton, Sussex, in August 1977. After unpacking the basics, Olive spent the first couple of days removing all the picture rails and chopping down an ornamental tree in the front garden. However, on hearing of her beloved Elvis Presley's passing – the soundtrack to her happy young days in 1950s America – she spent the next two days sobbing uncontrollably.

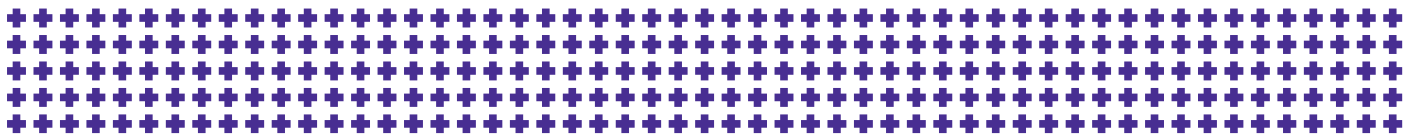
On Holli's retirement as Headteacher of Connaught School in about 1986, the Littlehampton house was sold, and a couple of years were spent living in London before Holli, Olive and Erica moved to Kent in 1989.

After Holli was diagnosed with vascular dementia, Olive increasingly struggled to cope with him and bravely sold the family home when she was in her eighties, and engineered a move with Holli and Erica to Bridport in August 2010, with the help of Simon and Cheryl. Looking after Holli took every moment of the day, and eventually she could no longer cope and he went to a care home in Axminster, dying aged 85 in September 2011, just one month short of what would have been their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Olive and Erica supported each other as they settled into life in Bridport.

After a few years Olive's increasing forgetfulness and eccentric behaviour – decorating bushes in the garden with crisp packets and lifting doors out of skips and carrying them home with Erica - in her early nineties this was confirmed as Alzheimer's, and she continued to live at home caring for Erica in a slightly eccentric way until the tables turned - and Erica assumed the role of Olive's carer with back up from Simon and Cheryl. Olive was out gardening for hours virtually every day, and took a delight in winking out all the dandelions on her neighbours' front lawns as well as her own, as well as sawing down the apple tree in the garden on Christmas Day. A couple of falls, and going AWOL on one occasion, put her firmly on the Doctor's radar, though Olive rejected all external attempts at care and intervention until and after a fall on Remembrance Sunday 2021 Olive was admitted to Hospital. Olive was subsequently transferred to Sherborne House Nursing Home, in Yeovil, just before Christmas that year, whose kind care she stayed under until her death.

After a short final illness at Easter when Cheryl, Rupert and Alice, one of her three grandchildren, were able to say their goodbyes, Olive passed away peacefully in the presence of Rupert at Sherborne House in Yeovil on 2nd April 2024, two months short of her 97th Birthday. As Erica said: 'Mummy is reunited with Daddy now, and Marilyn', Olive's lifelong nursing friend who died in Iowa USA last year.

*Cheryl Ludgate, Olive's daughter*



## Dennis Railey 12/7/38 - 28/5/24



Dennis with Marion Hollaway in 1988 at his Long Service Award presentation

**D**ennis was born in Treharris, Wales, to Fredrick and Dorothy – they were known affectionately as Mammy Doll and Daddy Fred. Dennis had two brothers, Colin and Alan.

As a youngster Dennis attended school in Treharris, where he spent the early part of his life. After completing his education, Dennis started work in the local colliery, where he stayed for two years.

At the age of 17 Dennis changed his career path and entered nursing. Dennis began nursing at Whitchurch Hospital and qualified as a mental health nurse in 1963. After a time, Dennis headed to London and qualified as a general nurse, and added general nursing, midwifery and health visiting to his skill set. In 1967 Dennis became a Queen's Nurse, and in 1968 was appointed District Nurse Superintendent, and eventually the first ever male Director of District Nursing in Kensington and Chelsea.

In 1970 Dennis met Douglas in Putney – they

spent 54 years together, 17 of these as civil partners.

In 1988 Dennis was awarded the Long Service Medal from The Queen's Nursing Institute after 15 years as the Director of Nursing for Richmond, Twickenham and Roehampton.

During his nursing career Dennis used his skills to take care of some notable figures, including Winston Churchill, Saudi Arabia's King Faisal, and conductor Sir Malcolm Sargent. Dennis also nursed several members of the Royal family, and had to sign the Official Secrets Act forbidding him to disclose anything about the Windsors.

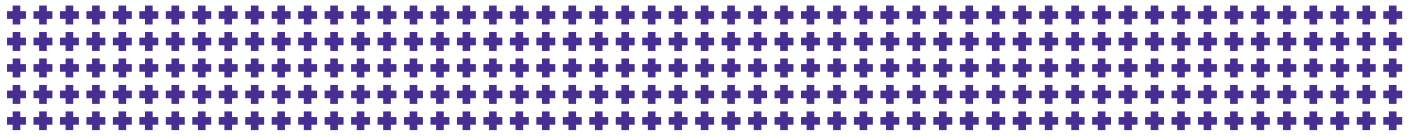
Despite years of nursing the sick, the worst tragedy Dennis experienced first-hand was the Aberfan disaster in 1966 in his homeland, when a coal-tip crashed down on top of a school. Dennis, who was born in the next village, was drafted to the scene. He recalled that bringing the children out of the school itself was a dreadful experience – a terrible tragedy.

After a long and fruitful career of ministering to others with dedication and love, Dennis retired in 1992, and he and Douglas were able to travel extensively. They also threw themselves into charity work and with friends worked tirelessly to raise funds for hearing dogs for the deaf. Their efforts raised about £150,000 for charity, and Douglas is carrying on this work.

Dennis never forgot his roots and travelled home often to Wales to visit his family and friends. Dennis enjoyed his well-earned retirement. Dennis's legacy is one of love – he was tireless in his efforts to make the world a better place in his own little way, either through his nursing career or his charity work.

Dennis summed it up perfectly himself: to a beautiful life came a peaceful end. Dennis died as he lived - everybody's friend.

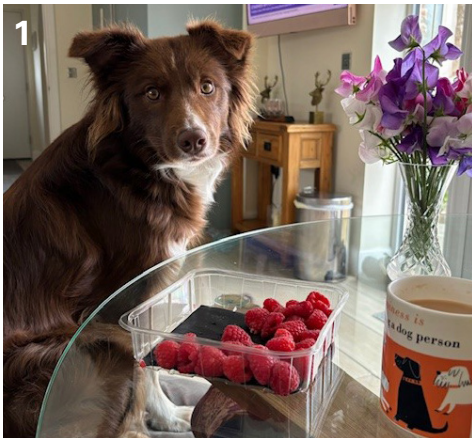
*Douglas Laird*



## Pet's Corner

Welcome to our Pet's Corner! If you would like to feature your pet, we would love to hear from you! Please email a photo (including your pet's name) to [suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk](mailto:suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk).

1. QNI staff Charlotte Fry's brown collie, Isla, having afternoon tea;
2. Charlotte with Penguin from Heythrop Zoo who was visiting a care home in Oxford, "he has been hand reared so quite used to cuddles, he regularly visits care homes with his keeper, similar to pets as therapy dogs."
3. QNI staff Joanna Sagnella's cavapoo (or 'cavoodle') Lyra posing whilst in the Peak District.



## 'Easyfundraising' for the QNI



Launched in 2005, Easyfundraising is the UK's biggest online charity shopping site. Easyfundraising partners with over 7,000 brands who will donate part of what you spend to a cause of your choice. It won't cost you any extra. The cost is covered by the brand you're shopping from.

If you would like to find out more and consider choosing the QNI as your chosen charity, please go to: [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk). Thank you!

## Feedback

We would love to know what you like (or would like less of!) about the newsletter, and if you would like to send in any reminiscences, we would be delighted to feature them. Please email us at [suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk](mailto:suzanne.rich@qni.org.uk), or write to Suzanne Rich, QNI, 1A Henrietta Place, London W1G 0LZ.

**Please note:** if you have recently changed address, please let us know by emailing us at [mail@qni.org.uk](mailto:mail@qni.org.uk).

## QNI News as it happens - online



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