

UKCCNA Position Statement: Nurse Staffing –17th Jan 2023

The NHS workforce is in crisis. The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic, together with unsustainable staff and funding shortfalls, has compounded pressure on services and urgent action is required to temper this escalating healthcare crisis.^{1,2,3} UKCCNA recognises the enormous pressure that the NHS services are under at the current time and the significant challenges nursing staff face.

We acknowledge that there may be some redeployment of staff to mitigate risks across NHS organisations. However, it should be recognised that the workload in critical care is dynamic and patient dependency changes rapidly, alongside the need to admit emergency critical care patients as required. In this context it is important that we maintain the GPICS and PCCS defined registered nursing ratios^{4,5} for critical care patients to ensure the delivery of safe care.

Recommendations:

- 1. Before staff are redeployed from critical care to other clinical areas, a risk assessment is completed by a senior critical care nurse-in-charge to assess staffing capacity, whilst maintaining the GPICS and PCCS ratios (please see CC3N Best Practice Principles to Apply When Considering Moving Critical Care Nursing Staff to a Different Clinical Area).⁶**
- 2. Ensure that nursing staff are able to return to the critical unit within 1 hour if the dependency and workload changes, ensuring that GPICS recommendations are maintained and to also facilitate the admission/transfer of critical care patients.**

¹ NHS Workforce: our Position. The King's Fund. <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/positions/nhs-workforce> [accessed 8 Jan 2023]

² ICS Jan 2023. Intensive Care staffing standards and the NHS workforce crisis

³ FICM, ICS and UKCCNA Joint Position Statement on Critical Care Staffing Standards

https://www.ficm.ac.uk/sites/ficm/files/documents/2022-06/ICS_FICM_UKCCNA_Position%20Statement_June2022.pdf [accessed 13.1.22]

⁴ 2 GUIDELINES FOR THE PROVISION OF INTENSIVE CARE SERVICES. Version 2.1 July 2022
<https://ficm.ac.uk/sites/ficm/files/documents/2022-07/GPICS%20V2.1%20%282%29.pdf> [accessed 13.1.22]

⁵ PCCS Quality Standards for the Care of Critically Ill or Injured Children 6th Edition October 2021

<https://pccsociety.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/PCCS-Standards-2021.pdf>

⁶ CC3N 2022 Best Practice Principles to Apply When Considering Moving Critical Care Nursing Staff to a Different Clinical Area. http://www.cmccn.nhs.uk/files/8016/6056/0557/Endorsed_Moving_of_Critical_Care_Staff-Best_Practice_Principles_v2_June22_final_aug22_kw.pdf [accessed 13.1.23]



Notes to readers:

The UK Critical Care Nursing Alliance (UKCCNA), established in 2013, provides a structured mechanism to facilitate collaborative working with all nationally recognised critical care nursing organisations across the United Kingdom. The aim of the UKCCNA is to be proactive and visionary about service requirements, providing quality assurance, enhancing the service, quality of care, patient experience and outcomes in critical care. Further details of UKCCNA member representatives are on the website:

<https://www.ficm.ac.uk/UKCCNA>

The member organisations of the UKCCNA are:

- Royal College of Nursing (Critical Care and Flight Nursing Forum)
- British Association of Critical Care Nurses (BACCN)
- Critical Care National Network Nurse Lead Forum (CC3N)
- National Outreach Forum (NORF)
- Intensive Care Society (ICS)
- Paediatric Critical Care Society (PCCS)