RCM MSW members news update

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2013 for RCM Maternity Support Worker (MSW) members. As the RCM approaches the fourth anniversary of launching MSW membership, more and more MSWs, MCAs and other staff supporting midwives are joining the UK’s professional body and trade union for the maternity team. In this newsletter we update you on the RCM’s medical malpractice insurance, the recommendations from the Francis enquiry and the changes to the RCM’s Position Statement on MSWs as well as information on learning and engagement opportunities.

In an MSW’s shoes

The RCM magazine Midwives has a series aiming to encourage interaction between midwives and MSWs in the maternity service by considering a number of scenarios. The second scenario in the series describes the events leading up to a serious incident review following the birth of a baby with sickle cell disease. The scenario raises questions on the role of the MSW and the midwife in antenatal screening. Please join the discussion at http://community.rcm.org.uk/

RCM updates Position Statement on MSWs

The RCM has updated its Position statement on MSWs to include a call for mandatory regulation. The Statement also for the first time states that Band 2 MSWs should not be carrying out clinical care. This is in response to the concerns raised by our MSW members that they are being required to work at a higher level but not being appropriately pay banded to reflect their increased responsibilities. NHS Trusts/Boards must comply with the job evaluation scheme that requires support workers caring out clinical observations to be at Band 3 or above. For further information please refer to Pay Banding and Job Evaluation an RCM Guide for Maternity Support Workers. Please see the members section of the RCM website to download the guide.

Report into unnecessary deaths at Mid Staffordshire

A £13 million public enquiry into the scandal at Mid Staffs where over 400 people died due to poor care has concluded that NHS support workers should be registered. This is just one of 290 recommendations of Robert Francis QC in a report that was launched on 6th February. Cathy Warwick, Chief Executive of the RCM stated that it was ‘good to see Francis recommend the regulation of health care assistants such as maternity support workers. The safety of people being cared for by the NHS must be paramount and regulating all those providing care helps achieve that’. Other recommendations include a Code of Conduct and minimum training standards for support workers.

Unionlearn Apprentice Guide

Unionlearn’s guide and advice for apprentices in the workplace, find out more about what you are entitled to as an apprentice visit the unionlearn website:

RCM Agenda for Change Consultation in England

As you are probably aware over the past few weeks the RCM has been consulting members on proposed changes to Agenda for Change. We consulted members through the branch structure so you may have attended a meeting to vote whether to accept or reject the proposed changes. You can see details of what the proposed changes were by visiting the RCM website, [http://www.rcm.org.uk/college/support-at-work/agenda-for-change/agenda-for-change-consultation/](http://www.rcm.org.uk/college/support-at-work/agenda-for-change/agenda-for-change-consultation/)

The consultation closed on the 4th February with 94% of branches/workplaces voting to accept the changes along with 85% of individual members, with 70 branches voting out of a possible 147. Jon Skewes the RCM’s Director of Policy, Employment Relations and Communications said ‘these proposals, the result of extensive negotiation, represent the most effective way of providing stability and protecting AFC as a national system of pay, terms and conditions in the NHS’.

RCM to now insure MSWs

The RCM has renegotiated its medical malpractice insurance to cover MSW members with no increase to their membership fee. The limit per claim is £5 million and covers damage for injury, death or illness alleged to have been caused by malpractice in the provision of professional services. More information is available on the RCM website.


MSW i-learn courses

We have now launched our first i-learn courses specifically designed for MSW’s, all you need to do to sign up to i-learn and access these free courses is to visit the RCM website and set up your username and password.

‘The Deteriorating Woman’ is designed to help MSWs to become more confident in identifying a deviation from the normal, enabling MSWs to respond appropriately in a clinical emergency situation or if they have concerns over a woman’s condition within the clinical or community setting.

‘The Neonatal Journey: Thermoregulation’ is designed to develop MSWs’ understanding of thermoregulation of the new-born. It will support MSWs in recognising deviations from normal and reporting these to the midwife.

Your Views

We want to hear from you. If you have any ideas for how we can raise the profile of MSWs in the RCM, or if you would like to contribute to a future newsletter or receive more copies of this newsletter please contact: denise.linay@rcm.org.uk

Have you joined the RCM yet?

Being in the RCM has many advantages. RCM MSW membership gives you exceptional support and representation at work from our workplace representatives and officers - qualified midwives trained in representation and negotiation. We understand the maternity workplace and the job you do. We work for your interests locally—such as during reconfiguration of services, and nationally on your pay, terms and conditions and pensions. Plus our legal assistance scheme includes representation in personal injury cases.

Membership can also help you develop your skills and career with guidance from a dedicated advisor, a free subscription to *Midwives* magazine, support from our union learning network and online courses.

See [www.rcm.org.uk](http://www.rcm.org.uk) to join today or talk to your RCM representative at work.