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2011: New challenges and opportunities for diabetes nursing

Happy New Year and welcome to the first edition of the *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* for 2011. Before we look ahead to the challenges, opportunities and developments for diabetes nursing in the weeks and months to come, it is often wise to take stock and reflect on the events of last year, good or bad – I’ll let you decide which of the following are which: the new coalition Government was formed, bringing the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives together in an unlikely union; rosiglitazone ceased to be available in Europe (Hicks, 2010); publication of the notorious NHS White Paper, *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS* (Department of Health [DH], 2010), which put us all in a spin; the first insulin patch pump was launched; and all 33 Chilean miners got out safely after being trapped for 69 days!

Looking back to January last year, we saw the launch of TREND-UK (Training, Research and Education for Nurses in Diabetes – UK), which brought together representatives from the National Diabetes Nurse Consultant Group, the Diabetes Inpatient Specialist Nurse Group, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Children and Young People’s Diabetes Community, the RCN Diabetes Nursing Forum, the Diabetes Nurse Facilitators Group, the Primary Care Diabetes Society (nurse representatives), the Practice Nursing Forum, the Diabetes Prescriber Network, as well as people with diabetes. TREND-UK is now recognised by NHS Diabetes, Diabetes UK, NICE, the DH and the pharmaceutical industry as the group representing the nursing voice within diabetes care.

In February 2010, shortly after its launch, TREND-UK published the second edition of *An Integrated Career and Competency Framework for Diabetes Nursing* (TREND-UK, 2010), which aimed to guide nurses through a career pathway towards diabetes specialism using a comprehensive and practical set of competencies, as well as providing guidance for commissioners in knowing what level of staff is required to deliver services. This Framework has been embraced not only by nurses working in diabetes care, but also by the Diabetes UK Education Task and Finish Group, which is currently using the Framework as a template for other disciplines in diabetes care such of medicine, dietetics and podiatry.

Bringing us up to the current day, on 21

January the *Health and Social Care Bill* (DH, 2011) was published, and on page 15 of this issue of the Journal, a national diabetes nurse working group present an article summarising their formal response to the public consultation period on the Government White Paper (DH, 2010) prior to publication of the Bill.

As we move into 2011, the Framework is currently being updated – this third edition will be published shortly, and will come free with your February edition of the Journal. I urge you not to miss this new updated version as it contains new competencies covering the following topics: screening, prevention and early detection of type 2 diabetes; promoting self-care; mental health; care of people with diabetes in prisons and young offender units; residential and nursing homes; and palliative and end-of-life care.

In addition, this Spring will see the completion of the “Education Pathway” (Hicks and Hill, 2010), which will sit alongside the updated competency framework to support nurses in furthering their skills and knowledge to enable career progression within the field of diabetes. This work has brought together nurses working in different settings such as clinical practice, research and health education institutions, and we have been given permission by the DH to use the multicoloured wheel developed to explain the “*Modernising Nursing Careers*” (DH, 2006) concept and apply it to diabetes nursing. To complement the education pathway, TREND-UK will be building a database of all available diabetes courses in the UK. This database will be accessible via the TREND-UK website by summer 2011 – if you provide a diabetes course and would like it included in the database please contact Sarah Dawes on 0207 627 1510 or e-mail TREND@sbcommunicationsgroup.com. ■

Department of Health (2006) *Modernising Nursing Careers: Setting the Direction*. DH, London

Department of Health (2010) *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*. DH, London

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Hicks D (2010) Rosiglitazone: End of the road. *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* 14: 324

Hicks D, Hill J (2010) Building a recognised and valued pathway to becoming a DSN. *Journal of Diabetes Nursing* 14: 286

TREND-UK (2010) *An Integrated Career and Competency Framework for Diabetes Nursing*. 2nd edn. SB Communications Group, London