



Terms of Reference

Registered Nurse Learning Disabilities Expert Reference Group (RNLD ERG) & Royal College of Nursing

RNLD Communities of Practice

This paper sets out the Terms of Reference for a Registered Nurse Learning Disabilities Communities of Practice.

BACKGROUND

In 2014 in response to the Strengthening the Commitment¹ - NI Action Plan the NI Collaborative was established to take forward the actions from the NI Action Plan. The NI Collaborative at that time requested NIPEC and the Royal College of Nursing, to establish a regional Professional Development Network/Forum for learning disabilities nurses

In 2019 the CNOs across the UK noted their intention to stand down the four countries Strengthening the Commitment groups. This coincided with the Department of Health (DOH) decision to undertake a review of the role of registered nurses; learning disabilities workforce in Northern Ireland. By agreement with the CNO it was intended that the recommendations from the review would inform the activity of the Collaborative going forward.

The 31st January 2020 marked the start of the pandemic. During the pandemic meetings and activity of the Collaborative and the Regional Professional Development Network/Forum for learning disabilities nurses was paused at the request of the HSC

¹ **The Scottish Executive** (2012). *The Report of the UK Modernising Learning Disabilities Nursing Review: Strengthening the Commitment*. Edinburgh; Scottish Government.

due to system pressures. Scheduled meetings were impacted significantly with only two catch up-meetings during this time.

The DOH is now concluding the review of the role of the Registered Nurses Learning Disabilities workforce in Northern Ireland (pending publication) and the CNO has commissioned NIPEC to establish a Registered Nurse Learning Disabilities – Strategic Development Project Group to take forward the outworking's of the review.

In September 2022 the CNO and the Chief Executive of NIPEC asked the Collaborative to provide a high-level overview of work of the NI Collaborative with a view to a refresh /rebrand and re-energising of the group whose primary function going forward would be to support the outworking's of the Registered Nurse Learning Disabilities – Strategic Development Project Group.

To that end the NI Collaborative members met on the 8th November 2022 and agreed the re-energised group should be known as the Registered Nurse Learning Disability Expert Reference Group (RNLD ERG). The RNLD ERG has since met on several occasions and have requested that the Regional Professional Development Forum is rebranded as an RNLD Communities of Practice (CoP) **open to all** Registered Learning Disabilities Nurses. This direction aligns the group with recommendations of the Nursing and Midwifery Task Group.

To that end the RNLD ERG have requested NIPEC to establish an RNLD CoP open to all Registered Learning Disabilities Nurses and other nurses who have an interest in supporting people with learning disabilities - across all settings to include HSC Trusts, the education sector and the independent/voluntary sector.

Purpose: Terms of Reference

- I. To provide a mechanism to share best practice in learning disability nursing, promote continuous professional development and provide a platform to explore registration specific and wider professional issues.
- II. To champion professional recognition of the valuable and important role of learning disability nursing
- III. To provide networking opportunities which support and promote professional connectedness
- IV. To provide a mechanism that facilitates communication with and to the learning disabilities nursing workforce on professional matters
- V. To support the development of links with other organisations as appropriate

Facilitation and administrative support will be offered by NIPEC. It is anticipated a minimum of three meetings a year will be scheduled and will be a mix of virtual and face to face. Information and dissemination of RNLD CoP meetings will be disseminated via the membership of the RNLD ERG.

Role of the Co-Chairs

- agree agenda for each meeting
- invite guest speakers as appropriate
- guide the meeting in a facilitative manner where discussions need an outcome and ensures an action is agreed
- take brief notes and agreed action points of discussions
- ensure room bookings/virtual arrangements for meetings are made

Conduct and Confidentiality

All members of the CoP are bound by the rules of confidentiality and ensure information is shared appropriately.

Finance and Resources

There are no specific resources available to support this initiative however the contribution of members and their employers are recognised as the main resource through which the CoP will be established and maintained. NIPEC will endeavour to provide modest funding to facilitate meetings which will be rotated around venues.

Accountability

The CoP will provide a verbal or written report of activity to the RNLD ERG.

Review

These *Terms of Reference* will be reviewed at the first meeting of each year.