

FLORENCE  
NIGHTINGALE  
FOUNDATION

90  
years



IMPACT REPORT 2020-2023

# THE RIPPLE EFFECT

# INTRODUCTION

## **Florence Nightingale Foundation (FNF) develops nursing and midwifery leaders to improve care and save lives.**

This year, 2024, Florence Nightingale Foundation (FNF) celebrates 90 years of developing nursing and midwifery leaders to improve care and save lives. I am delighted to publish this impact report 'The Ripple Effect' in our anniversary year. It demonstrates what happens when FNF enables nurses and midwives to connect, lead and influence health and care.

Through our comprehensive scholarship and leadership programmes, we have equipped thousands of nurses and midwives across the UK with the skills, knowledge, and inspiration to drive meaningful change. This report chronicles the Foundation's pivotal role in bolstering the nursing and midwifery workforce, advancing practice through evidence-based innovation, and elevating the voices of nurses as influential catalysts for improving health and care outcomes.

This report highlights the impact of our work under:

- ✓ Leading Change
- ✓ Improving Retention
- ✓ Combatting Inequalities
- ✓ Creating a Future Ready Workforce
- ✓ Improving Workforce Health and Wellbeing
- ✓ Improving Quality, Outcomes, and Safety of Health and Care



## **PROFESSOR GRETA WESTWOOD, CBE PHD RN**

Chief Executive, Florence Nightingale Foundation





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The Nursing and Midwifery Council works with the Florence Nightingale Foundation as a key stakeholder to engage with nurses and midwives across health and social care. In working with the Foundation, we are able to share respective insights into the latest challenges and opportunities facing the nursing and midwifery workforce at this time of change.

Anne Trotter, Director for Education and Standards, Nursing and Midwifery Council



Florence Nightingale Foundation provides invaluable support to policy makers through their experience and their access to engaged networks of nurses and midwives, across the whole of the UK, and even globally. Working collaboratively is the best way to achieve positive outcomes for our workforce and for healthcare as a whole, and I look forward to ongoing collaborations with the FNF community to support this. As an FNF Scholar myself, I can testify to the transformational impact of their programmes and the ongoing power of the active and engaged alumni network.

Sue Tranka, Chief Nursing Officer for Wales and FNF Trustee

# LEADING CHANGE

**The Florence Nightingale Foundation Academy® provides nursing and midwifery leadership development programmes and scholarships, supports a diverse membership community, and delivers independent thought leadership to change policy and improve practice.**

Over **20,000** nurses and midwives participated in our leadership and scholarship programmes over the past four years.

Our programmes have reached nurses and midwives from across the career lifespan including student nurses and midwives, nursing associates, newly registered nurses and midwives, emerging, established and senior leaders. Our leadership programmes have also focused on addressing a range of pressing issues, from improving healthcare sustainability, upskilling in digital capability, and fostering innovation in clinical education.

## Supporting leadership at a global level

In response to recommendations in the State of the World's Nursing 2020 report, we launched FNF Global to build global nursing and midwifery workforce capability and capacity<sup>1</sup>. Our Global Leadership Scholarship programme supports the leadership development of aspirant Global Chief Nursing Officers (GCNOs), offering Scholars the chance for collaboration and networking on a global platform, leading change projects, and developing and influencing new policy and strategic decisions.

So far, 13 nurses and 6 midwives have been selected as FNF Global Scholars (45% from low-middle income countries). The programme evaluation is ongoing, but two of our Global Scholars have now been promoted to GCNO positions, one within country and the other within state.

<sup>1</sup> State of the world's nursing 2020: investing in education, jobs, and leadership. Geneva: World Health Organisation 2020.

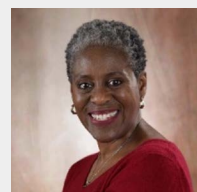
## Spotlight on a Scholar

Vinice Thomas undertook an FNF Leadership Scholarship 2020-2021. Our Scholars all undertake a quality improvement project as part of the programme. Vinice focused her project on further developing a talent management support network (TMSN) aimed at helping nurses and midwives from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background facing challenges in fulfilling their professional potential.

“The mentor I was allocated as part of the Scholarship supported me to think outside the box and look at the wider implications and applications of the TMSN. We piloted the programme with junior members of the team. At their celebration event there was not a dry eye in the house when we heard what a difference it had made to them. The Network has now been independently evaluated, we are working towards having the programme packaged up so it can become an off-the-shelf product and used much more widely.

Being amongst other leaders inspired me to be a better me! It inspired me to go further and higher.”

[Read more here](#)



**VINICE THOMAS**

FNF Scholar

# LEADING CHANGE

## Raising the nurse and midwifery voice

In the past four years, we've delivered a wide-range of high-profile policy and research projects which have brought the combined expertise of our alumni and membership community together on some of the biggest challenges facing health and care today.

Over the next year, we will build on this success and establish the FNF Policy Think Tank, offering a powerful platform for nursing and midwifery professionals to engage in health and care policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

## Influencing national policy

In 2020, Health Education England (HEE) commissioned us to conduct research examining the impact of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic on learning disability (LD) nurses and the services they provide.

Through focus groups with our LD nurse alumni community, our study identified how LD nurses kept people with learning disabilities connected and safe during an intense period of social isolation.

An article reporting on the project has been published in 'Learning Disability Practice' and can be accessed below. The results were presented to the HEE/ NHS E/I 'All England Plan for Learning Disability Nursing' steering group and informed the operational strategy for this vital workforce agenda.

[Read the article here](#)



Between 2020 and 2023, we have led

12

different policy development projects

# LEADING CHANGE

**Our FNF Academy membership offering, available since 2020, enables nurses, midwives and students working for member organisations to connect, lead, and influence health and social care.**

Academy membership offers benefits for the entire nursing and midwifery community, across all sectors and bands. Opportunities include online learning modules and webinars, a fellowship programme and avenues to influence our expanding policy work.



“Membership offers nurses and midwives like me the opportunity to network across the whole of the UK and internationally with other FNF members, develop leadership skills and self-awareness, and gain improved confidence and resilience.”

Suzanne Rees, Lead Nurse Clinical Diagnostics and Therapeutics, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board



Our [book](#), Leadership Development for Nurses and Midwives, published by Elsevier, will help nurses and midwives develop their unique leadership capabilities for better care, no matter what their level of experience.



117

Chief Nurse members

Our membership reach is over

250,000



“When I was chosen to do the new FNF Fellows programme I felt appreciated and rewarded by my Trust. I never had the opportunity to attend any Academy which actively support professionals in their career development.

But now I feel very excited to support my own career development as part of being a Fellow of FNF. My goal is to bring positivity within midwifery, unity at all staff levels, provide safe patient care and serve as an advocate for our profession.”

Rattan Gill, midwife, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

# IMPROVING RETENTION

## There is a retention crisis in nursing and midwifery. Our programmes are tackling it.

- 94% of surveyed alumni agree that their skills, knowledge and confidence improved as a result of their FNF programme<sup>2</sup>.
- 99% of surveyed alumni answered that they intend to stay in the profession.
- Of those, 75% say that the FNF programme was influential in their decision to stay in the profession.



“I was diagnosed with work related PTSD and depression a couple of years ago. Before I was accepted for the leadership course I was thinking I have no other choice but to leave nursing. FNF really shone the light for me, and made me realise there is so much I can give to the patients and future workforce.”

FNF leadership programme alumna

<sup>2</sup> Based on a survey of 639 FNF leadership programme alumni.

A qualitative study examining the perspectives of 30 of our alumni shows that our leadership and scholarship programmes reinvigorated their intention to stay due primarily to the following factors:



Increased confidence, assertiveness, and a belief in their ability to drive transformative change



Gained practical skills that provided tangible tools for navigating complex situations



Fostered a sense of professional belonging



Reconnected to their passion for nursing and midwifery



Enabled more exposure to senior roles which in turn led to more professional engagement and the ability to navigate career progression opportunities

# IMPROVING RETENTION

Through our student and early career programmes and networks we elevate the voices of newly registered nurses and midwives and help them overcome challenges to stay in the professions.

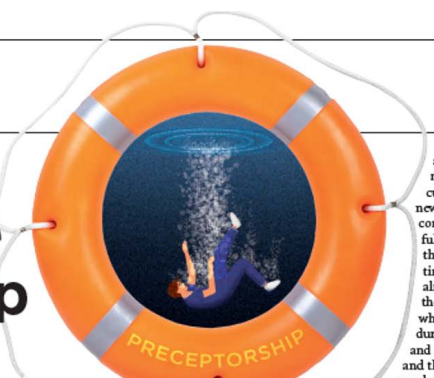
## Preceptorship campaign

Around 1 in 5 nurses in England leave NHS hospital and community services within their first two years on the NMC register<sup>3</sup>. There is a strong consensus that the first year after registration is a particularly challenging period for nurses and midwives. Preceptorship programmes provide structured starts and aim to provide support, guidance, and development to build confidence during this transition period.

To improve preceptorship, we partnered with the Nursing Times and UNISON to gather evidence about experiences of preceptorship for Newly Registered Nurses (NRNs) to advocate for change. [Our campaign](#) in 2021-22 directly contributed to the development and/or improvement of the 4 Country National preceptorship frameworks. We [repeated the survey](#) in January 2024 to continue building the evidence for high quality preceptorship for all. This showed that encouraging progress had been made since the initial survey but more still needs to be done.

## Nursing News

Campaign calls for all NRNs to receive 'vital' preceptorship



<sup>3</sup> Palmer, W., Rolewicz, L., Dodsworth, E. (2023). 'Waste not, want not. Strategies to improve the supply of clinical staff to the NHS.' Nuffield Trust. Read [here](#).



## Student Councils programme #FNFstudents

From 2021 to 2023, we developed and led the delivery of the [Student Councils programme](#) in NHS England South East that aimed to incorporate the voices of student nurses, midwives, and allied health professionals into the development of education and learning structures across the region.

Successful councils achieved tangible outcomes for their student populations, such as establishing hardship funds and wellbeing support initiatives, which may contribute to reducing student attrition rates.

We have since advised other regions and nations on student shared professional decision-making.

[Read the full evaluation report here](#)

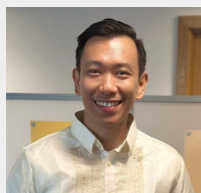


# COMBATTING INEQUALITIES

## Supporting internationally educated nurses and midwives

To support the retention and development of internationally educated nurses and midwives (IENMs), FNF was funded by the Burdett Trust for Nursing to develop and deliver an interactive online leadership programme for 2,000 IENMs over two years. Subsequent funding from NHS England and NHS provider organisations supported an additional cohort (610 places). In collaboration with our International Nurse and Midwife Subject Expert Group, we commissioned digital storytelling experts Patient Voices to create inspiring short films documenting the real-life stories of five internationally educated nurses now working in the UK.

The digital stories can be viewed here



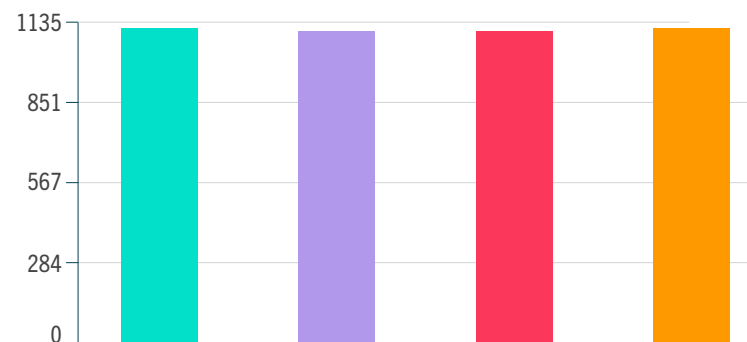
Paul Jared de Jesus, from the Philippines, is one of the nurses who took part in the programme. Jared moved to the UK in October 2021 as a theatre nurse and the IENM programme allowed him to continue his professional development, learn new skills, and connect with others facing similar challenges. He reflected that the programme started a journey to “being an educator, sharing my knowledge, growing in the profession I love.” He found the sessions on quality improvement particularly useful.

“International nurses need to speak up when we want to see change. I have learnt how to approach this now. You need to give reasons and data before you ask to do a quality improvement project.” Since the programme concluded, Jared has secured a more senior position in his Trust and his team won the 2022 Nursing Times Workforce Award for best international recruitment team.

To read more from Paul Jared and two other IENM programme participants in the Nursing Standard journal, [click here](#).

## Evidence of learning outcomes

n= 1,135



- 98% of participants said that their understanding of the topic had increased through participating in the programme.
- 97% of participants agreed that the programme contributed to their professional development.
- 97% of participants stated they were motivated to create change in their workplace because of the programme.
- 98% of participants would recommend this programme to others.

# COMBATting INEQUALITIES

## Spotlight on our Mary Seacole leadership programme

Over the past three years, our NHS England-funded Mary Seacole Leadership Development programme has aimed to address health inequalities and discrimination in the workplace.

Developed in partnership with the Mary Seacole Trust, and with support from the nursing and midwifery unions, each participant undertakes a quality improvement project focused on improving health outcomes for patients or on reducing health inequalities, particularly for people in global majority communities. So far, 73 nurses and midwives have graduated from this programme.

“The Mary Seacole Trust is so incredibly proud to be a partner in delivering this inspirational programme. It is supporting nurses and midwives who are not just dedicated to self-development and becoming future leaders; they are also change-makers in addressing health inequalities. For our workforce and in our communities.”

[Trevor Sterling, Chair, Mary Seacole Trust](#)

“NHS England is delighted to work with the Florence Nightingale Foundation to enable the delivery of the Windrush and Mary Seacole leadership programmes for England. We believe very strongly in working in partnership to address the inequalities in our workforce and we have heard directly from participants of the impact that these programmes have had on them as individuals and on their wider teams and the communities they serve.”

[Liz Fenton, Director of Nursing and Midwifery, NHS England](#)



“The Mary Seacole Leadership Development programme helped me to develop a better self-understanding and showed me the importance of mentorship in developing capabilities through constructive feedback and ongoing motivation. The QI project I carried out as part of this looked at the impact of early dietary education on the outcome of pregnancy, in an area where 85% of service users are from black or ethnic minority backgrounds.

The changes put in place as part of my project led to improved access to best practice healthcare for women with language barriers.”

[Dian Bates, Diabetes & Obesity Specialist Midwife, North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust](#)



# CREATING A FUTURE READY WORKFORCE

## Providing the evidence base for digital transformation

We're providing the evidence to support nurses and midwives to spearhead digital transformation. In 2022, Health Education England's Digital Readiness Programme tasked us to convene our network to lead the Annual Digital Nursing Assessment (ADNA).

This assessment gauges the progress and impact of the National 'What Good Looks Like' guidance for nursing, shaping future priorities. Our findings revealed significant growth in digital nursing workforce maturity, yet challenges persist, including varying digital literacy among nurses, exclusion from digital procurement decisions, and interoperability issues. These insights directly informed the Phillips Ives Review, determining the digital age needs of the nursing and midwifery workforce for the next twenty years.



"Florence Nightingale Foundation provides quality leadership support to nurses and midwives from all areas of the professions. We particularly value the leadership opportunities and investment in nurse-led/informed research, as well as the access they provide to nursing and midwifery expertise.

Most recently we worked together on the Phillips Ives review to explore the digital transformation of care and optimisation of data."

Prof. Ruth Endacott, Director of Nursing & Midwifery, National Institute for Health and Care Research

## Building digital leaders

Florence Nightingale Foundation offers a leadership development programme for aspiring digital nurses and midwives across the career pathway who are taking their first steps on a digital path and aspire to influence digital transformation. They leave with the tools to influence organisational and patient outcomes at a local, system, national and international level of health and social care delivery through digital transformation.



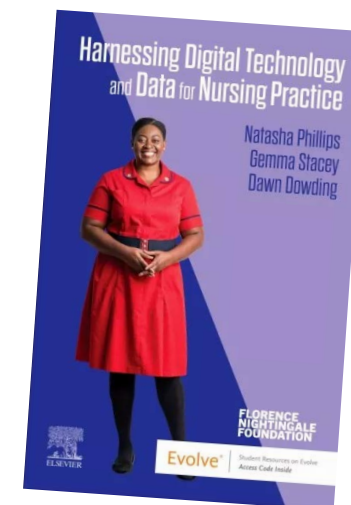
"This course delivered a sense of belonging into the digital nursing and midwifery area as I transition into my new role as Information officer."

Cora Flynn, Nursing & Midwifery Information Officer, Dublin Midlands Hospital Group

"I will take away a lot of learning from the programme to enable change management and to engage with staff at my organisation in making digital technology a good tool to improve patient outcomes"

Mymy Del Rosario, Matron for Education, Mid Yorkshire Teaching NHS Trust

Elsevier published [our book](#), *Harnessing Digital Technology and Data for Nursing Practice*, to support nurses and midwives to take the lead in the digital transformation of health care.



# CREATING A FUTURE READY WORKFORCE

## Developing nurse and midwife innovators

We believe that nurse and midwife innovation is critical for improving patient and health outcomes and addressing the ever-changing health and care landscape.

That's why we started an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Subject Expert Group (SEG), which brings together nurse and midwife innovators from across the UK to empower the professions to get involved in pioneering new solutions and leading change.

The SEG hosted our first Innovation Hackathon in September 2023, connecting nurses and midwives from FNF Academy member organisations with experts in healthcare innovation for a full day of collaboration to turn their ideas into reality.

[Read about our SEG](#)



Hackathon participants with members of the FNF Innovation and Entrepreneurship SEG

## Environmental sustainability in healthcare

We know that the greatest impact FNF can have on sustainability is through our alumni and membership community being empowered to lead disruptive change and influence others.

In partnership with Nuffield Health, FNF delivered its first Green Healthcare Leadership Development programme in 2023, resulting in 18 clinical change projects saving thousands of tonnes of carbon. We are now continuing with new cohorts of this programme in collaboration with NHS England too.



“We have reduced use of blue-roll covers across our hospital, working with the different teams such as physiotherapy and outpatients. I estimate this could save over seven trees per year at our one hospital. I'm now working with our primary care leads about removing couch covers across Nuffield Health's primary care services.”

[Rachael Brown, Infection Prevention Nurse at Nuffield Health Warwickshire Hospital](#)

“As the largest single group of staff in the NHS, nurses and midwives have a unique role in supporting the Greener NHS agenda and bringing about sustainable change. Florence Nightingale Foundation's innovative Green Leadership programme empowers nurses and midwives to lead and implement change in their workplace to support the NHS' net zero goal. I am proud to be co-chairing the FNF Sustainability Subject Expert Group which focuses on bringing the nursing and midwifery voice to the sustainable agenda at a policy level.”

[Professor Charlotte McArdle, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer – Quality, Safety, Sustainability and Women's Health, NHS England](#)

# IMPROVING WORKFORCE HEALTH & WELLBEING

## Nightingale Frontline®

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we launched, in April 2020, our Nightingale Frontline co-consulting service. At that time, our goal was to provide emotional well-being support for nurses and midwives.

We have supported over 3,500 nurses and midwives through this service. We concluded in the BMJ<sup>4</sup> that leadership and well-being support provided by an independent and external organisation can offer a unique and safe forum for reflection and for healthcare leaders to decompress.



“The FNF Frontline leadership session provided me with much-needed support at a time of uncertainty while being newly qualified. It was also a brilliant opportunity to connect with people all over the UK in similar roles, seek peer support, gain new ideas and coping strategies.”

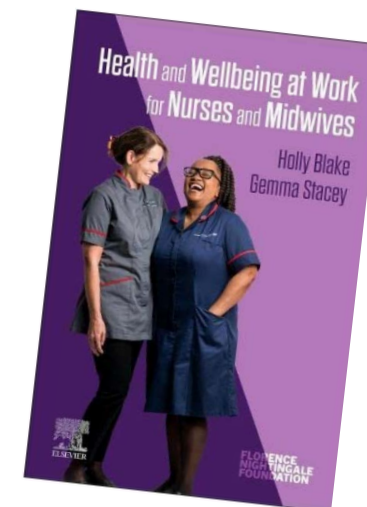
Pippa Chillman, Newly Registered Mental Health Nurse



We are now offering a new Nightingale Frontline Facilitator Masterclass programme to reach more nurses and midwives. Nurses and midwives develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to facilitate supportive sessions in their own workplace.

[Find out more here](#)

Our [book](#), Health and Wellbeing at Work for Nurses and Midwives, published by Elsevier, is a guide to addressing stress and burnout for the professions.



## Clinical Supervision network

The Covid-19 pandemic reignited discussions about the importance of clinical supervision. In response to requests from our Academy Members, FNF convened a Subject Expert Group (SEG) to collaborate to influence the opportunity to access clinical supervision for nurses and midwives.

The SEG shared recommendations with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and influenced national groups such as the National Preceptorship Programme (England). Read more about the SEG achievements in the [Nursing Times article](#). By 2023 the SEG had achieved the 'vision 2022' that the group had originally set out, and it evolved into a [Network](#) to enable the masses of clinical supervision enthusiasts to connect and learn.

We are now launching an online module on Clinical Supervision, sponsored by North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust with contributions from the Foundation of Nursing Studies, for our Academy Members.

<sup>4</sup> Bond C, Stacey G, Matheson J, et al, Development of Nightingale Frontline: a leadership support service for nurses and midwives during the COVID-19 crisis, BMJ Leader 2022;6:307-311. Read [here](#).

# IMPROVING QUALITY, OUTCOMES, AND SAFETY

## Policy work: Raising worries and concerns

Improving patient safety is a critical focus in our work. Recognising and treating patient deterioration promptly can significantly reduce preventable mortality in clinical settings, but too often the warning signs of deterioration are ignored. As part of our 'Worry and Concerns' project we identified that organisational culture, professional hierarchies, and leadership styles are the primary factors which influence whether early patient deterioration is flagged.

Our findings have been reported to NHS England's Acute Deterioration Board, aimed at improving patient safety and preventing avoidable mortality. They have also been published in the Journal for Patient Safety<sup>5</sup>.

[Find out more here](#)

“The Worry and Concern steering group are very appreciative of the important work undertaken by FNF and Professor Michael West, Kings Fund. The findings, insights and learning from the insightful report have already been shared with our pilot sites who are participating in the national Worry and Concern Improvement Collaborative, which is aimed at implementing systems and processes to enable patients and families to escalate their worries and concerns in relation to acute illness and deterioration and to document their wellness or concerns about their health into the health record.”

Jane Murkin, Deputy Director Safety & Improvement – Nursing, NHS England

5 Vehvilainen, E, Charles, A, Sainsbury J, Stacey G, Field-Richards S, Westwood G, Influences of Leadership, Organizational Culture, and Hierarchy on Raising Concerns About Patient Deterioration: A Qualitative Study. Journal of Patient Safety (DOI:10.1097/PTS.0000000000001234, May 24, 2024. | DOI: 10.1097/PTS.0000000000001234

## Leading quality improvement

Improvement is at the heart of our approach to developing nurse and midwifery leaders. All our Scholars, and many of our leadership development programme participants, undertake a quality improvement project. Many alumni publish their projects, evidencing significant impact on policy, practice and workforce.

Our alumni have published on topics ranging from creating psychological safety in the workplace, improving end of life care, improving midwifery education, and deeper understanding of the impact of advanced nurse practitioners on improved patient care. Together, our alumni have published over 200 articles in peer-reviewed journals detailing quality improvement over the past decade. You can view our most recent Scholar publications in our compendium below:

[Read more here](#)





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Thank you to all of our generous supporters and sponsors. In particular, we would like to thank the following organisations, who have supported the work highlighted in this report:**

Burdett Trust for Nursing

Capgemini Invent

Elsevier

Mary Seacole Trust

NHS England

Nursing and Midwifery Council

Nuffield Health

UNISON

Unite

Royal College of Nursing

Royal College of Midwives

All [FNF Academy Members](#)

And the final thank you is to all of the nurses and midwives who make up the FNF community, and indeed all nurses and midwives everywhere who continue to meet the challenges and provide quality care and support for their communities.

**FLORENCE  
NIGHTINGALE  
FOUNDATION**



Join us to reach one million nurses and midwives, to improve care and save lives.



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