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#FNFStudents

FNF Students' Day 2026



Leadership from Day 1



**University of
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**HCA
Healthcare UK**

Students' Day 2025



FNF Students' Day Sponsors

The 2026 FNF Students' Day is generously sponsored by the University of East London, with additional support from HCA Healthcare UK, proud sponsors of the Florence Nightingale Commemoration Service.



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At the University of East London, our nursing and midwifery programmes are built on a simple belief: that great healthcare begins with inclusive, career-focused education. Based in one of the UK's most diverse communities and working in partnership with leading North East London NHS trusts, we train the next generation of nurses and midwives in state-of-the-art simulation facilities and real clinical settings. From adult, mental health and children's nursing to midwifery, our graduates leave ready to deliver compassionate, evidence-based care - and to help address the workforce challenges facing the NHS today.

The University of East London's Vice Provost (Health) and Executive Dean School of Health, Sport and Bioscience, Robert Waterson, said "We're proud to sponsor Students' Day and to stand alongside the Florence Nightingale Foundation in celebrating the next generation of nurses and midwives. The work they do to champion, support and inspire students is exactly the kind of impact we want to back - it aligns perfectly with our mission at UEL to develop career-ready healthcare professionals who will shape the future of the NHS."



HCA Healthcare UK is one of the country's leading private healthcare providers, offering expert medical care across a network of hospitals, outpatient clinics, GP practices and NHS partnerships. With experienced clinical teams of consultants, nurses and allied health professionals, HCA UK deliver a breadth and depth of expertise across a range of clinical specialties that's unmatched in the independent sector.

HCA Healthcare UK's Chief Nursing Executive, Kathryn Hornby, said of the FNF Students' Day, "Leadership is not about title or seniority; it is about responsibility, values and the confidence from the very start of your career. At HCA UK we believe that students and early career nurses are leaders from the beginning, through influencing culture, shaping care and making a difference to patients and colleagues every day. This reflects our commitment to develop compassionate and confident nurse leaders of the future."

FNF Students' Day 2026 - Leadership from Day 1

A warm welcome to FNF Students' Day 2026. You have been selected to represent nursing and midwifery students from across the UK and beyond - and we are thrilled that you are joining us.

The event today is generously sponsored by the University of East London, with additional support from HCA Healthcare UK, proud sponsors of the Florence Nightingale Commemoration Service that closes the day.

This year's theme is 'Leadership from Day 1' because leadership is not something you save for later. The habits, values, and courage that make a great leader, must be practised from the very beginning. What leadership looks like will change as you progress - the scope widens, the responsibility deepens, the decisions grow harder - but wherever you are in your career the question is never whether to lead, but how. FNF Students' Day is about equipping and encouraging you to start, or deepen, your leadership practice now.

Today you will hear from inspiring nursing and midwifery leaders, explore your own leadership style, and connect with peers and the wider FNF community. The day ends with the Florence Nightingale Commemoration Service at Westminster Abbey, where students from our sponsoring organisations will process down the nave behind FNF Scholars - our lamp carriers and escorts - in a symbolic passing of the flame of nursing excellence from generation to generation.

It promises to be a full and memorable day and, for those not in the procession, there's time to enjoy a Spring-time afternoon in London too. This brochure includes the full agenda, a bit of history and details of our speakers and panellists.

We hope you leave Students' Day feeling inspired, energised, and proud of the career you are building in nursing and midwifery. The Florence Nightingale Foundation is here to support you every step of the way.

Yours,



Prof Greta Westwood CBE, RN, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
Florence Nightingale Foundation

Timing	Item	Speaker/s
9:30-10:00	Registration and networking coffee	
10:00-10:05	Welcome from FNF	Prof Greta Westwood CBE, Chief Executive Officer, FNF
10:05-10:20	Welcome from UEL	Robert Waterson, Vice-Provost of Health and Executive Dean, University of East London
10:20-10:50	Keynote Address	Prof Donna O'Boyle, Acting Executive Director of Professional Practice, NMC
10:50-12:00	Personality and preferences in teams: exploring your leadership style	Prof Greta Westwood CBE and Debbie Preston
12:00-12:10	Break	
12:10-12:55	First Steps on the Journey: reflections from FNF alumni and members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festus Omeike • Cerys Jones • Mandeep Lally • Natasha Evans • Darvey Clint Gario
12:55-13:05	A message from the founders of the DAISY Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonnie Barnes FAAN, Co-Founder and CEO, DAISY Foundation • Mark Barnes FAAN, Co-Founder and Board President, DAISY Foundation
13:05-13:15	Closing address	Kathryn Hornby, Chief Nursing Executive, HCA Healthcare UK
13:15-14:15	Networking Lunch	
14:35	Students from UEL and HCA Healthcare UK walk to the Abbey for the rehearsal Students from other organisations have the afternoon free in London	
17:15 – all to be seated by 18:15	Westminster Abbey doors open	
18:30-19:30	Florence Nightingale Commemoration Service	

FNF Students' Day

The FNF Students' Day brings together representatives of our future nursing and midwifery workforce for learning, leadership development and inspiration.

Following daytime sessions, attendees head to Westminster Abbey to join nursing and midwifery leaders from across the four nations of the UK and beyond for the annual Florence Nightingale Commemoration Service. During the Service a group of student nurses and midwives follow the esteemed FNF Scholar alumni lamp carrier and escorts in the procession, signifying the transfer of knowledge to future generations of nurses and midwives. Students have been part of the Service since it began in Westminster Abbey in 1965.

Students' Day is for students attending an FNF Academy Member organisation or working on placement in one. At this year's event we will have students representing the following organisations:

- University of East London
- HCA Healthcare UK
- Ministry of Defence
- University of Salford
- University of Derby
- Edge Hill University
- University of Parma
- Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust
- Mid and South Essex NHS Foundation Trust
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
- Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust
- Bournemouth University

Photos, Social Media and Keeping in Touch



We will be taking photos during the day (please let us know if you don't want to be in these) and you are also very welcome to take photos throughout Students' Day. Photography is also permitted inside the Abbey before and after the Service, but not during it. FNF has appointed an official photographer and videographer to capture the Service, and photos will be shared with you after the event.

We want to make some noise about the day on social media to highlight you all as nurses and midwives of the future and the importance of 'Leadership from Day 1'. Please come ready to take and share your photos, video clips and thoughts on whatever social platform you are on. The overall theme of the day is leadership – so consider this in your posts but don't be restricted by it. Just use the hashtag #FNFStudents, and tag the Florence Nightingale Foundation, so we can engage and amplify your voice. We may even use some of your photos in our own communications and follow-up.

If you are not already receiving it, please do sign up to the FNF newsletter, to keep in touch with news and future events. Just scan the QR code.

Our Speakers & Facilitators

Prof Donna O'Boyle MBE

Donna is a registered nurse and experienced leader with clinical, legal and policy expertise. In her role leading the Professional Practice Directorate at the NMC she is responsible for the Code, Revalidation, standards and education, and the practice learning environment including Education Quality Assurance. She is also leading on a comprehensive plan to update these elements, and by 2028 to regulate Advanced Practice for nurses and midwives.



Donna has worked very closely with the NMC over many years in her role as Prof Regulatory Advisor at the Scottish Government. Prior to that she held many senior nursing and governance roles across Scotland and England. Donna also worked as a Specialist Clinical Advisor at the NMC, supporting the improvement of our fitness to practise processes. Donna was awarded an MBE in 2025 for her contribution to patient safety.

Prof Greta Westwood CBE

Greta joined the Florence Nightingale Foundation in 2017 as the Chief Operating Officer and has been the CEO since September 2019. Greta has been a Registered Nurse for 39 years; she qualified as a nurse in 1983 and a midwife in 1987.



Greta is an FNF Alumna (2012 Leadership Scholar). She completed an MSc in Health Psychology in 1996 and a PhD in Nursing in 2010.

Greta was one of the first genetic counsellors for the Wessex Clinical Genetics Service from 1987-2007 and was part of the team who established the Association of Genetic Nurses and Counsellors (AGNC). She held a joint Clinical Academic post with the University of Southampton from 2000-2005. From 2008-2012, she established, and then led, the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Comprehensive Local Research Network (now NIHR Wessex CRN).

Greta held a joint post (2012-2017) with Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust (PHT) and the University of Southampton as Director of Clinical Academic Practice for the university and NIHR Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) Wessex. She led the university's clinical academic training programme for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals and was promoted to Professor for this work. In December 2020, Greta was awarded a CBE in the New Year Honours List 2021 for services to Nursing and Midwifery.

Robert Waterson

Robert Waterson joined the University of East London in February 2020 and is the Vice Provost (Health), and Executive Dean of the School of Health Sport & Bioscience. Since joining the University of East London in 2020, Robert has made significant contributions to the University's reputational and strategic success in health, including the development and launch of the Neighbourhood Health Hub and the creation of Europe's first end-to-end simulated Hospital and Primary Care Training Hub.



In parallel, he has grown the School and is accountable for academic quality and student experience across Sport, Allied and Public Health, Nursing and Midwifery, and Bioscience.

Robert draws on his extensive academic and vocational experience in high-level partnership development and in establishing and leading practice centres, with a focus on building primary health and social care education and delivery models aligned to the University's ambitions.

Kathryn Hornby

Kathryn Hornby is Chief Nursing Executive for HCA Healthcare UK. Kathryn has worked for HCA for 9 years; initially as Deputy Chief Nursing Officer and then promoted to Chief Nursing Officer for London Bridge Hospital and latterly Harley Street Clinic, prior to being promoted into her current role in 2025. Before joining HCA Healthcare UK, Kathryn worked in the NHS as an oncology and critical care nurse. Kathryn has completed her MBA, Masters in Advanced Practice and is currently an FNF Senior Scholar.



Debbie Preston

Debbie Preston is the Head of Academy Operations at the Florence Nightingale Foundation, bringing together a strong clinical foundation with operational leadership and expertise in developing leaders across healthcare. Debbie's clinical background is rooted in Intensive Care nursing, including specialist experience as in advanced respiratory care and ECMO.



Debbie's career progressed into Practice Development within Critical Care, where she expanded her remit to lead trust wide programmes focused on Clinical Leadership development. This included major operational and workforce initiatives such as overseas recruitment and induction, preceptorship design, clinical CPD collaboration with HEIs, and the establishment of the Professional Nurse Advocacy service.

Debbie has overseen the coordination, delivery of large-scale education and leadership programmes, enabling her teams to deliver high quality learning experiences at scale, whilst ensuring programme delivery aligns with strategic objectives, workforce needs, and clinical priorities.

Our Panellists

Darvey Clint Gario

Darvey is a Cardiac Charge Nurse and Clinical Educator at The Harley Street Clinic, part of HCA Healthcare UK, where he works across Adult Cardiac Units taking care of patients undergoing Cardiothoracic surgery, Cardiac Interventions, and Electrophysiology procedures. He combines Clinical Leadership with a passion for Education and Workforce Development, with a particular interest in supporting early career nurses and internationally trained staff.



Darvey began his UK career at Barts Heart Centre, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he worked as a Cardiac Staff Nurse from 2017 to 2022. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from West Visayas State University in the Philippines and is an Alumnus of the FNF Leadership Programme for Internationally Educated Nurses. In 2025 he was awarded the NHS England Chief Nursing Officer - Silver Award for Outstanding Services to Nursing.

Natasha Evans

Natasha is a paediatric nurse currently training as a Specialist Community Public Health Nurse at King's College London. She began her nursing career in a special educational needs school, where she developed a strong foundation in holistic, child-centred care and a real commitment to supporting children and families in community settings.



Natasha is particularly driven to support nurses at the start of their careers and to help make the profession feel more accessible and inclusive. She is a student ambassador for the School and Public Health Nurses Association (SAPHNA), where she advocates for the role of school and public health nursing and supports the development of the future workforce. Alongside this, she supports the work of UN Women UK, reflecting her wider interest in equity, representation, and creating supportive environments within healthcare and beyond. Natasha has been part of the Florence Nightingale Foundation family for several years now, including co-chairing Students' Day in 2024, and she is thrilled to be returning as an early careers panelist for a second year.

Cerys Jones

Former professional violinist and Professor of Violin, Cerys Jones began her journey into nursing in 2021, and joined the register as a Cardiothoracic nurse in 2023. Cerys currently works in the Cardiac Catheterisation Theatres in University Hospital of Wales, and was a recipient of the Florence Nightingale Foundation Fellowship in 2024.



Aside from cardiac nursing, Cerys is passionate about nurturing a collective voice and culture of wellbeing, agency and development for all Band 5 nurses, from newly qualified to those nurses at the top of their band. Cerys is mentored by the Deputy Chief Nursing Officer for Wales, Gillian Knight.

Mandeep Lally

Mandeep began her healthcare journey as a healthcare assistant before transitioning to nursing after completing a Law degree. Since earning her Adult nursing degree in 2017, she has worked at UHDB Trust across various wards and became a sister on a dual-speciality Cardio-renal ward.



Mandeep's leadership role during the pandemic led to involvement with the Florence Nightingale Foundation and numerous quality improvement projects. As a volunteer and Director with British Sikh Nurses, she raised awareness in the South Asian community. Now a Senior Lecturer at De Montfort University, her passion lies in teaching Nursing Research and Leadership, continuing to research its impact on safe care. Her achievements include awards, publications, and recognition in a book celebrating UK-India ties

Festus Chinedu Omeike

Festus Chinedu Omeike is a cardiac nurse based in MRI at Manchester Royal Infirmary, part of Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust. He serves as a Cultural Ambassador and Early Career Lead, and co-chairs a national working group under the Chief Nursing Officer for England. Through his work with the Florence Nightingale Foundation, Festus champions inclusive leadership and supports the development of future nursing leaders.



The DAISY Foundation



HONORING NURSES INTERNATIONALLY
IN MEMORY OF J. PATRICK BARNES

Bonnie and Mark Barnes, FAANs Doctor of Humane Letters (h.c)



Bonnie and Mark Barnes spent their careers working as advertising and marketing executives. They were retired in 1999 when Mark's son Patrick, age 33, developed the auto-immune disease ITP.

Pat and his wife Tena had given birth to the family's first grandchild 6 weeks prior to Pat's illness, so they flew to be with him. Pat's death was a terrible surprise to his family. However, the nursing care they experienced during Pat's 8-week hospitalisation compelled them to express their gratitude to nurses everywhere for the clinical skill and especially compassionate care nurses provide every day. This is why The Barnes's created The DAISY Foundation™ (an acronym for diseases attacking the immune system) and The DAISY Award® for Extraordinary Nurses.

Today, The DAISY Award is celebrated wherever nurses practice, wherever they are in their careers in nearly 8,000 healthcare facilities and nursing schools in 46 countries. Over 280,000 nurses have been honored, having been nominated by their patients, patient families, and colleagues.

Each nomination (over 3.8 million to date) tells the story of extraordinary compassion and care provided to a patient. The impact of these stories' public DAISY Award celebrations on nurses and their organisations is well documented. The DAISY Award provides healthcare leaders the means to highlight all the "right" going on in their organisations, providing great role-modeling opportunities and a way to make tangible the organisations' mission and values. The programme helps drive organisational culture, inspires and motivates extraordinary nursing, nourishes teamwork, enhances nurse engagement, promotes the professional image of nursing, and helps offsets compassion fatigue.

The Foundation also funds grants for nurses doing research and evidence based practice projects.

For more information, please visit www.DAISYfoundation.org.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE FOUNDATION

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