

News Release
22 January 2010



The Queen's
Nursing Institute

18 January 2010

The Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) this week launches a new film showing nurses at work with homeless people. The film also shows how the QNI's Homeless Health Initiative (HHI) has helped nurses to improve care. The film includes some inspiring, challenging and emotional moments in this challenging field of practice.

Research from homelessness charity Crisis has shown that the average age at death for rough sleepers is 42. They are 40 times less likely to be registered with a G.P. and four times more likely to use Accident and Emergency departments than the general population. Yet the QNI's own research, undertaken as part of the HHI project, discovered that nurses working with these very vulnerable people often feel isolated, under-resourced and unsupported – for example, 74% of respondents to a survey stated that they were lone workers 'always, often or sometimes'.

The film shows Jane Gray, Consultant Nurse in Leicester, and Fiona Lerner, Team Leader/ Health Visitor in Bradford, both members of the HHI network, at work with homeless patients. Interviews with Jane and Fiona highlight both the issues faced by homeless people and the issues faced by nurses. It also demonstrates how the support of HHI makes a difference to both nurses and patients.

Kate Tansley, the Homeless Health Initiative's Co-ordinator, said: 'It is inspirational to see nurses at work supporting this very vulnerable group of people, and the difference that they make to homeless people's lives. We also hope this film will alert professionals to an important set of free online resources, produced by HHI, which can help more nurses offer better care to homeless people.'

Rosemary Cook CBE, Director of the QNI, said: 'We were delighted to get three years' funding from the Big Lottery Fund for this very important homelessness initiative. This film is a real reminder of the importance of this work, and how a national support network can transform nurses' working lives and spread good practice across the country.'

Ms Cook added that the QNI is currently seeking a new source of funding to continue the HHI work after the BLF grant ends in June 2010.

The film is enclosed with this press release, and further copies are available from the QNI by sending your name and full contact details to Barbara.walsh@qni.org.uk or by calling 020 7549 1400.

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Notes to editors

1. The Queen's Nursing Institute is a registered charity founded in 1887 that provides a wide range of support to community nurses and their patients.

2. The Institute's Homeless Health Initiative is supported by the Big Lottery Fund over three years to improve the health of vulnerably housed people.

3. The list of free resources available from the Initiative includes:

'Boosting and Building Better Healthcare for Homeless People' (2009)
'Sharing our stories of Innovation, Learning and Good Practice' (2009)
'Finding the Support You Need' (Diane Tofts, 2009)
'Involving homeless people in their health services' (2008)
Practitioners' Guidance (2008)
Commissioners' Guidance (2008)

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