



The
Queen's
Nursing
Institute

A large, detailed photograph of a white water lily flower with a yellow center, floating on a pond. The flower is in full bloom, and its reflection is visible in the water below. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

Queen's Nurse
Reflections
on the Executive Nurse Leadership Programme

Contents

Foreword.....	3
Reflections from:	
Una Addersley.....	4
Gill Beardsmore.....	6
Debbie Brown.....	8
Helen Chapman.....	10
Angela Cook.....	12
Janette Cooper.....	14
Michelle Cox.....	16
Sara Fantham.....	18
Michelle Johnson.....	20
Penny Keith.....	22
Tracie McKelvie.....	24
Helen Mehra.....	26
Debbie Myers.....	28
Jane Naismith.....	30
Yemi Osho.....	32
Salli Pilcher.....	34
Denise Thiruchelvam.....	36
Recipe for Success.....	38



Foreword

Excellent community nursing services depend on confident and competent nurse leaders to create the vision, map the pathway and sustain high quality nursing care for the communities served. Learning to lead in this way at an executive level is an opportunity that many nurses are never afforded.

However, in 2018, a group of Queen's Nurses embarked upon an Executive Nurse Leadership programme, funded by the National Garden Scheme and delivered by the QNI in partnership with the Leadership Trust.

The ambition of both the Queen's Nursing Institute and the National Garden Scheme was to support these Queen's Nurses to develop and grow in their executive roles, so that they could be optimally equipped to meet the challenges of caring for people in their homes and communities at both an operational and strategic level.

The bespoke programme comprised three residential modules and one-to-one mentorship from a Fellow of the Queen's Nursing Institute. The challenging programme supported the Queen's Nurses to develop in ways that they could never have imagined at the start. I had the pleasure of meeting them all at each of the residential modules and the growth in their skills, confidence and competence was remarkable. The stories they told at the end of the programme about its impact on their work – and ultimately on the leadership of the services for which they had executive responsibility – were extraordinary.

The impact was greater than the Queen's Nursing Institute and the National Garden Scheme could ever have imagined when I and George Plumptre, Chief Executive of the



National Garden Scheme first discussed the potential for the programme to be developed, several years ago.

The Queen's Nurses recognise that their life-changing experiences on this unique programme has been wholly dependent upon the vision and generosity of the National Garden Scheme. So, the Queen's Nurses set about creating a tribute to the National Garden Scheme both to give thanks for the opportunity to undertake the Executive Leadership programme and to evidence their growth and development, each selecting their favourite flower to provide the focus for their reflection.

The resulting book of reflections and poems about their experiences is a masterpiece of creativity. My thanks to every Queen's Nurse who contributed - and to the National Garden Scheme, without which none of this would have been possible.

Dr Crystal Oldman CBE RN RHV
Chief Executive, The Queen's Nursing Institute

Queen's Nurse: Una Adderley

Una's Reflections

'Clover, (genus *Trifolium*), annual and perennial species in the pea family (*Fabaceae*). Widespread across the world ... useful as livestock feed, cover crop or green manure.

The flowers are highly attractive to bees, and clover honey is a common secondary product ... tolerates shade, repeated mowing, and foot traffic very well...'

My nursing career has encompassed clinical practice, research, education and nursing management. Early on, I stumbled across a group of nursing researchers who have had a major influence on my career. Their knowledge and passion for research evidence as the nutrient that feeds excellent clinical practice ('useful as livestock feed, cover crop or green manure') nurtured my own emerging skills as a novice researcher and evidence-based practitioner.

Their enthusiasm for getting evidence into practice ('The flowers are highly attractive to bees') fed my own appetite. Through them, I learned to differentiate between good quality and poor quality evidence so I could better seek out the 'nectar' that is needed for good clinical practice ('clover honey is a common secondary product').

As I developed into a researcher and advocate for evidence-based practice, I became increasingly aware of the myth of the 'ivory towers of academia'. Research is hard work and constant challenge is an essential part of the role. However, a research training

does nurture resilience ('tolerates shade, repeated mowing, and foot traffic very well...') which is essential as I move forward in a leadership role where I seek to ensure that good quality evidence forms the bedrock of clinical practice.

'As leaders we must know and control ourselves first...'

Unusually, I have simultaneously held posts in both clinical practice and academia for most of my career. This has given me confidence and knowledge to move in both worlds but always as a part-time participant in each. While there are benefits from this arrangement, such as wider knowledge and appreciation of differences in workplace culture, this can lead to the sense of always being the 'outsider' and an accompanying lack of confidence. I have realised that it is more useful to reframe this self-view of the 'outsider' to that of being the one with a USP of breadth of knowledge and experience. By 'gripping self' to overcome my diffidence I can make a more useful contribution to driving forward the values I espouse to deliver better patient care.

...then, and only then, may we lead and enable others...

Recently, my QNI mentor asked me whether I was 'a Sherpa or a flag planter'. Seeing my puzzlement, they explained that both leadership styles are valuable, but it is helpful to know which style you prefer. A flag planter takes pleasure from achieving the task with the help of the team. A Sherpa takes pleasure in

enabling the team to achieve the task. I have realised I prefer to be a Sherpa. My satisfaction comes from getting the right team around me, giving them the freedom and support to perform to their best and then overseeing the task to ensure co-ordination to achieve the goal. The risk of this approach is that your leadership may seem invisible. In future, in order to 'grip team' better, I need to ensure that the team is aware of the full plan, understands their part in it, is aware of the ongoing co-ordination and success is visibly recognised.

... to fulfil the ambitions of our stakeholders.'

The purpose of the QNI is to ensure quality patient care in the community with the vision that all people are provided with the best possible nursing care, by the right nurse with the right skills, in homes and communities, whenever and wherever it is needed. This resonates with the aims and vision of my current post. To achieve this, I need to nurture resilience by taking better care of my physical needs (I have joined a gym!) as well as my emotional, mental and spiritual needs (which already get a reasonable amount of attention). I also need to step up and use my voice to 'grip others' through storytelling and leading by example to win the hearts and minds of others to achieve the change that is needed.

So, to return to my original analogy of the clover flower, to continue to work towards the aims of the

QNI, my research and clinical knowledge needs to be ever-present ('perennial species') I need to spread the message about evidence-informed practice as widely as possible continue to nurture the view of good quality research as an essential nutrient for good clinical care ('useful as livestock feed, cover crop or green manure'), endeavour to make research outputs attractive to those responsible for providing care ('the flowers are highly attractive to bees') to drive forward excellent clinical care ('clover honey is a common secondary product'). Alongside this, I need to look after myself to maintain resilience so I can continue to 'tolerate shade, repeated mowing, and foot traffic!'

Una's Biography

Una is a Registered Nurse, District Nurse and Queen's Nurse. Una has been involved in tissue viability clinical practice, education and research for over 20 years. In that time, she has worked to increase knowledge and understanding about evidence-informed care in a wide variety of ways. This has included teaching undergraduate and post graduate nurses, contributing to a range of wound care research studies, researching judgement and decision making for wound care and campaigning to raise the profile of wound care. She has published widely on wound care, particularly in relation to leg ulceration. Una is now responsible for developing and delivering the new National Wound Care Strategy Programme for England.

Queen's Nurse: Gill Beardsmore

Gill's Reflections

30 years ago getting a role as a General Practice Nurse was tough. Without experience there was no job and without a job, no prospect of gaining experience. I was incredibly grateful to the senior nurse who gave me a chance, took a risk and offered me my first role. I haven't looked back.

30 years on not much has changed. It's still difficult to get a foot in the door of general practice nursing without experience but I'm determined to help others as I was helped. I started the QNI's Executive Nurse Leaders Programme keen to identify the skills and abilities I needed to fully support my vision.

I soon realised the value of defining myself by who I am, rather than by the skills and abilities I have. I began to recognise that I already have all the skills and abilities I need; my new task now is to value them and determine how they can define me as the leader I aspire to be.

Breakthrough moments

- Reputation is important but relentless pursuit may result in imbalance.
- Central to achieving balance is a firm confidence in who I am.
- Failure is not mine alone to shoulder; just as the sharing of success is spread across a team.

- I choose to daily embrace Michelle Obama's antidote to imposter syndrome.
- Challenging assumptions is important.
- I will allow time for my own creativity and encourage it in others.
- Leadership is multi-directional and this opens up a world of opportunity.
- Taking risks is important as is the need to articulate when help and support is needed.
- Being open and honest demands a level of authenticity that I welcome.
- Trust can be built but is dependent on a relationship between credibility, reliability and care.
- Getting below the waterline is crucial if trust is to flourish.
- Experiencing temporary blindness, if for only for forty minutes, revealed more than I could have imagined. Losing sight helped to me to truly see when team members struggled, see the skills of others, see ideas and creativity and see the importance of being firm and decisive. My feedback established a new level of confidence and inner strength in who I am as a leader.

As a leader

As a leader I want to display confidence but retain humility. If I have nothing to say, I want to stay silent. If I make judgments I want to make them with thoughtfulness, insight and without bias. I want to

quickly make amends when I'm wrong. I want to be credible and reliable and be known for one who keeps her word and can be trusted. I want to be courageous, committed and show compassion in the way I handle things. I want a good sense of humour because I know that laughing can release tension. I don't want to make excuses; I'd rather learn from my mistakes and become wiser. I don't want to always play safe and I don't want to be frightened of taking a risk. I want to influence people of status yet remain true to my values; brush shoulders with many, yet maintain an authentic connection. Above all, I want to be comfortable with myself so that others are comfortable with me.

Cornflowers

Cornflowers, in the past, used to grow in abundance in cornfields. They are now endangered in their native habitat due to changes in agriculture and use of herbicides. However, they have been introduced as an ornamental species in gardens and once again the beautiful blue flower thrives. General Practice Nurses are in short supply. We need to find new ways of ensuring their future and like the cornflower, make sure this vital element of the workforce continues to thrive.

Gill's Biography

Gill's 34 years as a Registered General Nurse has been primarily in primary care and specifically in General

Practice. Her non-medical prescribing qualification, an in-depth knowledge of cardiovascular disease and treating minor illness contributed to her development as a General Practice Nurse Leader. Gill gained further experience in a nurse led environment at a city-based walk in centre where her experience grew in teaching and supporting the development of others.

With a keen interest in problem solving and managing change she is now focussing efforts around the education and development needs of general practice nurses, health care assistants and nursing associates. Gill completed a Master's degree in Medical Education with distinction at Nottingham University in May 2014 and this culminated in a research dissertation entitled, 'General Practice Nurse Education: attitudes to training'.

Gill has written for a number of nursing journals, her latest publication entitled 'What's being done to develop the next generation of general practice nurses' appearing in the July 2018 edition of 'Journal of General Practice Nursing'. She is currently employed by Health Education England and has a remit for the implementation of the General Practice Nurse Ten Point Plan across the East Midlands. Gill's role title is Primary Care Nurse Workforce Lead and in 2017 she was proud to become a Queen's Nurse.

Queen's Nurse: Debbie Brown

Debbie's Reflections

My childhood dream came true when I passed the School of Nursing entrance test to become a State Enrolled Nurse in 1980, and although there have been many changes since then, the passion, commitment and drive to do things better has never changed. Yet, the nagging doubt of feeling like an imposter was always there.

Over the last 39 years I have continued to expand on my clinical competencies and challenged myself academically. Always striving to be the best nurse, and 'me' that I can be.

The QNI Executive Leadership Programme (ENLP) email arrived in my inbox and at first I was hesitant to apply as I didn't feel that it was applicable to me, based on it being for 'Executives'. I was then encouraged to apply by a previous attendee which turned out to be one of the best decisions I have ever made.

I arrived with imposter syndrome and a little apprehension, however once getting to know our amazing group in such a safe environment led me to quickly discover that I was in the right place.

Those first few days brought an onslaught of emotions that I hadn't been able to prepare for. I challenged and pushed myself knowing that it could only result in

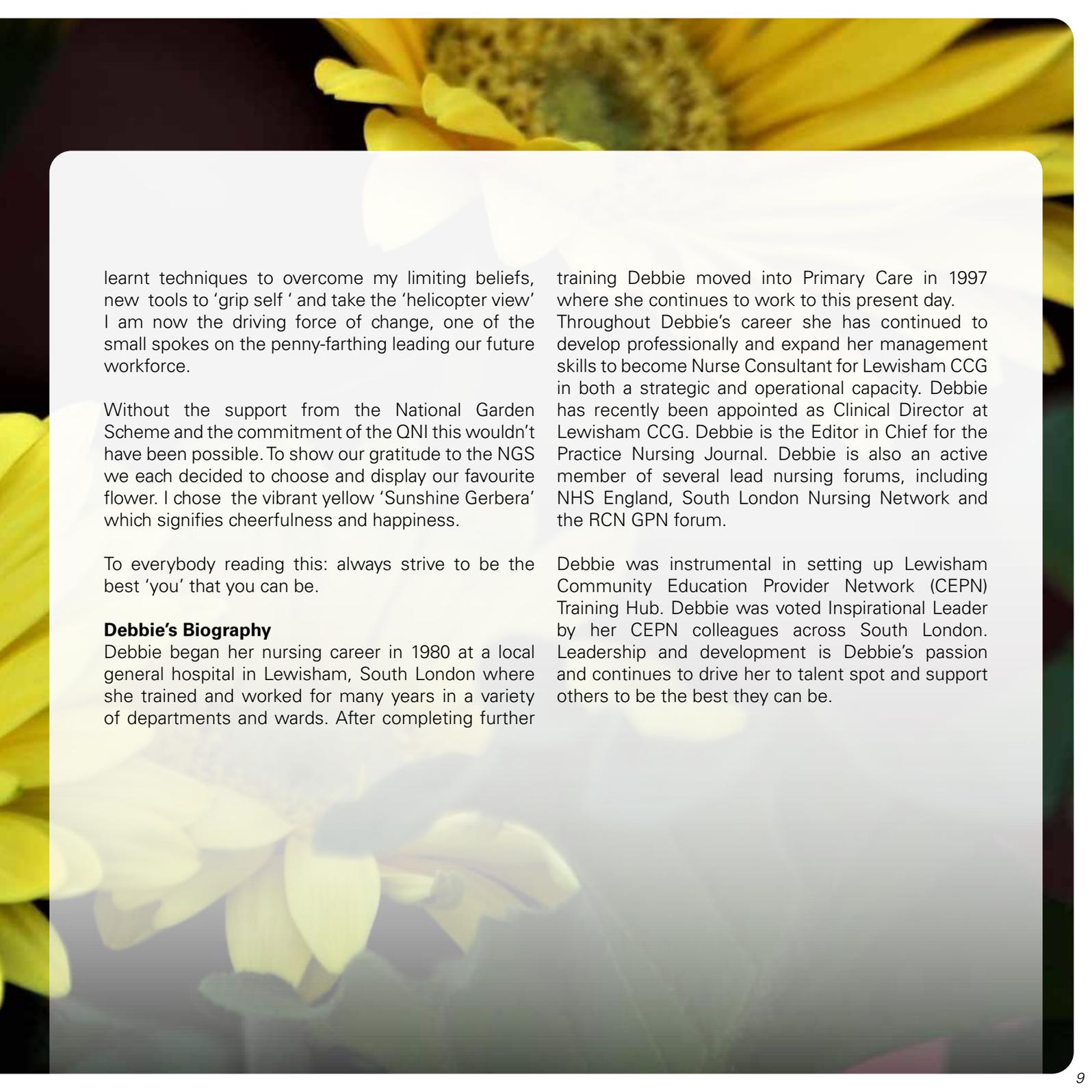
the betterment of my professional practice; therefore improving patient outcomes, as well as my own happiness.

As a reflective practitioner I have always questioned my actions yet could not always find the right answers. Why had it taken me so long to reach my destination, and still upon arriving would push myself further putting myself under more pressure? My breakthrough moment was uncovering the limiting belief that 'I was never good enough' and having the tools and support to flip this belief into that of: 'being myself is ok'.

We spoke a lot about our values, beliefs and purpose during this course and it reinforced to me that my driving value is authenticity. It's what I strive for, and it's what I respect most in others.

This course gave me the time and space to reflect, to listen, and to think of myself, gaining so much confidence on the way and also expanding my peer group with such inspirational Queen's Nurses who started as colleagues and whom now I call friends.

Before joining ENLP I would frequently describe myself as one of the large spokes on a penny-farthing; being led, rather than taking control of my own direction. Now, without imposter syndrome, having



learnt techniques to overcome my limiting beliefs, new tools to 'grip self' and take the 'helicopter view' I am now the driving force of change, one of the small spokes on the penny-farthing leading our future workforce.

Without the support from the National Garden Scheme and the commitment of the QNI this wouldn't have been possible. To show our gratitude to the NGS we each decided to choose and display our favourite flower. I chose the vibrant yellow 'Sunshine Gerbera' which signifies cheerfulness and happiness.

To everybody reading this: always strive to be the best 'you' that you can be.

Debbie's Biography

Debbie began her nursing career in 1980 at a local general hospital in Lewisham, South London where she trained and worked for many years in a variety of departments and wards. After completing further

training Debbie moved into Primary Care in 1997 where she continues to work to this present day. Throughout Debbie's career she has continued to develop professionally and expand her management skills to become Nurse Consultant for Lewisham CCG in both a strategic and operational capacity. Debbie has recently been appointed as Clinical Director at Lewisham CCG. Debbie is the Editor in Chief for the Practice Nursing Journal. Debbie is also an active member of several lead nursing forums, including NHS England, South London Nursing Network and the RCN GPN forum.

Debbie was instrumental in setting up Lewisham Community Education Provider Network (CEPN) Training Hub. Debbie was voted Inspirational Leader by her CEPN colleagues across South London. Leadership and development is Debbie's passion and continues to drive her to talent spot and support others to be the best they can be.

Queen's Nurse: Helen Chapman

Helen's Reflections

Leadership as Gardening

I have almost 30 years experience as a Community Nurse and this leadership programme has allowed me the time to invest in myself and recognise my personal power as a leader. I have chosen to use the analogy of gardening to articulate my key learning:

Groundwork

Create the right conditions for growth by understanding your own personal values, beliefs, capabilities and the environment you are working in. Explore your feelings about the project and recognise how these can impact upon your behaviour. Do you and your team share the same vision and are you clear about your purpose?

Grip the task

What outcome is required? A productive vegetable patch or herbaceous border? Don't jump straight in to start; pause to assess the situation, the task and your options. Have a clear plan; select the right plants, tools that can collectively deliver the outcome. Be clear about your intent and communicate this to your team. Look to others who have undertaken similar projects for advice and support.

Nurture

Give your garden the time and space to grow but don't neglect it; regularly check progress. If the plants start to go wild step in and refresh the plan. Pay attention

to the variety of plants around you and their individual needs, don't just concentrate on the biggest or most abundant flowers. Love your garden, talk to your plants and they will bloom.

Interference

Be vigilant for bugs and pests which could disrupt or distract you from achieving your goal. Rather than reacting to how these make you feel, manage challenges calmly, consider their impact, step back and respond rather than reacting.

Look after yourself

An exhausted gardener will be unproductive and sets a poor example to others. Acknowledge that the work can be hard and take time out to recharge your energy. You are not the only gardener so use your network for support and don't be embarrassed to ask for help.

Share your experience

When your flowers are in full bloom, open your garden and let others see what you have achieved. Actively ask for feedback from those who come to view so that next year your garden will be even better.

My flower

My colleagues chose this flower, Hellebore, describing me as resilient and hardy, adding brightness and being the first to step forward to help.



Helen's Biography

Helen is passionate about articulating the value of District Nursing, the transformation of care in the community and person-centred, individualised care. Helen values patient and staff engagement as central to leading transformation.

Helen has twenty-nine years' District Nursing experience; practising as a District Nurse Team Leader/Practice Educator for 19 years before moving full time into strategic leadership positions. Helen originally qualified as a District Nurse in 1990 as part of the Bachelor of Nursing Degree programme at Manchester University.

Helen is highly supportive of newly qualified nurses being appointed directly into community especially given that her first post as a registered nurse was as a Deputy DN Team Leader.

Helen is Head of Integrated Community Care, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals (NHS) Foundation Trust.

Queen's Nurse: Angela Cook

Angela's Reflections

Flowers have been used as a means of communication for many years, each flower with its own symbolism and unique meaning. As QNI Executive Nurse Leadership Programme graduates, we each chose a flower to represent ourselves and, to present to you, the reader, a bouquet of different accounts and reflections from our programme.

The flower I chose (Yellow Dahlia) at the time of its nomination had no special meaning to me other than I love them for their perfect petals and spectacular colours making it an invaluable asset for summer flower borders and patio.

Having decided upon my flower I was then curious to know its meaning. Once discovered, I was surprised by how much it resonated with me, quite uncanny really. I am therefore writing this reflection around the symbolism of my flower and I hope some of my story with resonate with you as you read it.

It's a curious thing the human mind and how at the age of 55 years with all my life experiences including 32 years as a nurse it disabled me as I walked into a room on that very first day. I felt like I had a great big sign over my head saying 'Imposter'. The fear of being exposed, that I didn't deserve to be there, was overwhelming. I wasn't as good as all these other

nurses, they were 'Executive' nurses and I wasn't, surely, I would be 'found out' at any moment.

My rationale for applying had been to address the very thing that was now wrapping itself slowly around me, like a vine, stifling the real me. I had come here to learn how to manage my self-doubt and develop strategic thinking skills.

I was inquisitive at the title of the first module 'Me'. Surely, we wouldn't be spending all that time on this subject matter? How wrong was I and what became blatantly clear as the sessions progressed was that if you don't look after yourself and invest and nurture 'self' you will never gain the antidote to 'imposter syndrome' nor reach your full potential.

Acknowledging your inner strength and successes can motivate you to be the best and to withstand all the difficult moments by staying positive and strong. What I learnt from the first three days was that we should always stand up for things we hold true and be ourselves no matter what everybody else thinks. We owe it to ourselves to be unique and to pursue our dreams no matter what the rest of the world thinks. My flower symbolizes change in positive way, and I left module one with a new sense of self appreciation and worth.

Throughout module two the focus shifted to 'us'. I was one of the team now and what a collective resource we all were. Again, the meanings associated with my flower echoed throughout module two. Firstly, showing commitment to our values and seeing equality and diversity as a strength so we are truly inclusive leaders. In addition, I was reminded that we should keep our behaviours under control no matter how hard it might seem. In the words of our facilitator 'feelings drive behaviours'. Respecting others and the variety we all bring helps us shape a better future and community.

As I returned for our final module I did so with a sense of sadness. I had met some truly amazing nurses, developed a bond with them and together we were a force to be reckoned with. Resilience and 'what next' were the main themes for our third module. Again, I was reminded of our floral theme as the programme ended. Having grown and flourished would I like my flower at the season's end regress?

My flower becomes dormant over the winter months ready to regenerate when the right conditions return. I too will return to my workplace but unlike my flower at the end of the summer will not be dormant. I will continue to bloom and cultivate the next generation of community nurses.

'I stay graceful under pressure, especially in challenging situations. I draw upon inner strength to succeed, standing out from the crowd and following my own unique path. I stay kind despite being tested by certain life events and am committed to my values and ideals. I represent diversity since each petal fits seamlessly into the whole head'.

Angela's Biography

Angela trained as a Registered General Nurse at Bromley Hospital qualifying in 1986. She worked as General Nurse for 9 years before becoming a Practice Nurse in 1995. After 8 years in General Practice, Angela began work as a Diabetes Specialist Nurse going on to become the Clinical Nurse Manager for the community Diabetes Nursing Service in 2007.

During her time working as a Diabetes Specialist Nurse she gained an MSc in Diabetes from the University of Warwick as well as qualifying as a non-medical prescriber. She was also a teaching fellow with Warwick University.

After 12 years in the field of Diabetes, Angela moved to her current position as Head of Nursing & Quality for Adults for Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust.

Queen's Nurse: Janette Cooper

Janette's Reflections

As a Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service (QARNNS) Commissioned Officer and a Queen's Nurse (QN), I felt I had entered the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI) Executive Nurse Leadership Programme (ENLP) as a slight anomaly. Some cannot comprehend the link between the caring and compassion that underpins nursing, against the lethal fighting power that resounds from the Armed Forces. The only difference between myself and my QN colleagues, is that I have chosen to risk putting myself in harm's way in the protection of my patients. It is for this reason I feel most affiliated to the Poppy, a flowering plant of the family Papaveraceae that has intertwined my life both as a Nurse and as a Military Officer.

Poppies symbolise sleep, peace, and death: sleep and peace due to the sedative and analgesic effect of the narcotic opioid drugs (Morphine and Codeine) extracted from *Papaver somniferum*; and death in the common blood-red colour of the corn poppy *Papaver rhoeas*. Since these poppies grew on the battlefields of trench warfare in Flanders during World War One, they have become synonymous globally as a decorative symbol, worn in remembrance of those who have given their lives in all wars since the early 20th Century.

Having undertaken multiple operational deployments

in various Pre-Hospital and Primary Healthcare locations as an Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Non-Medical Prescriber in Afghanistan, I feel I have been personally touched by the power of the poppy on a number of times. Afghanistan's opium poppy harvest produced more than 90% of illicit heroin globally, and more than 95% of the European supply, which the Taliban used as a source of income to build the insurgency, hence the original reason for the NATO invasion of Afghanistan. As a result of the counter-insurgency, I was then able to utilise the legal medicinal property of Morphine to comfort those of my patients (both Afghani and other nations) who had been brutally injured. Finally I have since been greatly comforted by the symbolic effect of the poppy, as an act of remembrance for those I have nursed and lost during my career.

As the only military nurse entering the QNI ENLP, I felt at first like a bit like a lone poppy, but have been overwhelmed by the inclusivity this group of awe-inspiring women have shown me. As a privileged collective of Queen's Nurses from across multiple healthcare organisations, we were all looking to identify our best strengths and expose (in order to develop) our weaknesses; transform ourselves from experienced managers to proactive leaders; make a step up to strategic board level and transformational thinking; and improve our personal resilience, credibility and self-belief from that of 'not just nurses'.

Thanks to the National Garden Scheme supporting the ENLP, this has also provided a new network of peer support and enabled us to forge new professional links where we can share experiences in pursuit of the health, well-being and safety of our patients.

All that I have learned along the way both as Commissioned Officer and as an Executive Nurse has been centred to maximise the best effect to my patients. This programme has allowed me the time and space to look inwards and help unlock new potential within myself. I now have new confidence that I hope to realise during my remaining RN Service and to also take with me once I return to the NHS where my professional career first started as a cadet nurse back in 1985. As my RN career draws ever closer to 'retirement' in 2023, I shall look forward to embracing these new-found professional relationships. In the meantime however, I have recognised out of this programme that I now need to advocate the QNI more widely across my military nurse colleagues.

Janette's Biography

Janette's first 13 years after qualifying were spent in NHS Primary Care. Joining the Royal Navy (RN) in 2003, she continued her Primary Healthcare (PHC) vocation, studying to become an Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Non-Medical Prescriber. She was selected as the Speciality Nurse Advisor to the Medical Director General (RN) in 2009, and in 2014 was appointed as the Defence Specialist Advisor to the Surgeon General. Acting as a focal point for PHC issues; driving strategic change management through healthcare and personnel policy development across the Defence Medical Services, her career experience has also included multiple operational deployments in war zones providing pre-hospital, primary and emergency care. She was awarded her Queen's Nurse title in 2016.

Queen's Nurse: Michelle Cox

Michelle's reflections

1. When a flower doesn't bloom you fix the environment in which it grows, not the flower.
2. You may not be where you want to be, but you are also not where you were. That is progress in every sense of the word. Be proud of yourself for where you are today.
3. Your journey is not the same as mine, and my journey is not yours but if we meet on a certain path, may we encourage each other.
4. When you connect with a Queen's Nurse, understand that they will not entertain egos, nor play on a lower vibrational frequency with you. Either rise and meet them or vibrate out. They won't mind either way.
5. You did what you knew how to do, until you learned how to do it better.
6. Growth is uncomfortable because you've never been here before. You've never been this version of you. So, give yourself a little grace and breathe through it.
7. Own your highness, shine your brilliant light and be a dazzling example of what is possible if you only believe.
8. The idea that happiness is in the next place, the next job. Until you give up the idea happiness is somewhere else, it will be never be where you are.
9. A Queen's Nurse is not just a title, or a state of being, it is attained after years of self-work, emotional healing mental refinement and spiritual maturation. People will recognise you by the way you carry yourself.
10. Don't let your food get cold watching someone else's plate.
11. You are busy doubting yourself whilst so many are intimidated by your potential.
12. Release the need to measure up to 'perfect'. You won't get it right all the time. Give yourself a chance.
13. Who you were, who you are, and who you will be are three different people.

14. You can start late; start over, be unsure, act different, try and fail, and still succeed.

15. Fall in love with the process of becoming the very best version of yourself.

16. Your name is in rooms your feet haven't even entered yet.

17. The day you plant the seed is not the day you eat the fruit.

18. You don't keep a queen in your back pocket to win the game, always stay at the top of the deck.

My Flower

Anemone - the daughter of the wind bringing protection against illness and disease.

Michelle's Biography

Michelle is a registered nurse at NHS England – North. She is passionate about and committed to the delivery of high quality care. Michelle has worked in a variety of health care settings, gaining wide experience across commissioning, and uses her experience to influence health and social care policies in relation to

issues of inequalities in health at local, national and international level.

Michelle is the North of England lead nurse to the Chief Nursing Officer's BME Strategic Advisory Group. She is passionate about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and is keen to see a shift in culture and leadership across the NHS ensuring the workforce and boards are representative of our communities.

Her work has been recognised with a number of prestigious awards and in 2018 was presented with the title of Queen's Nurse in recognition of her commitment to high standards in patient centred care. Michelle describes the time she spent in Barbados, as possibly the most significant milestone in being able to influence health promotion and patient engagement with black and ethnic minority communities.

Michelle was until recently Chair of the board at Steve Biko Housing Association, which provides quality affordable homes for those in need of housing. She is currently a board member to set the strategic direction of the organisation.

Queen's Nurse: Sara Fantham

Sara's Reflections

My journey on the QNI Executive Nurse Leadership Programme is represented by a daffodil.

The daffodil is synonymous with spring, and a symbol of new beginnings.

The course has been a journey out of which new opportunities and 'new beginnings' have arisen.

In China, daffodils represent bringing forth positive things together with their message of being uplifting and energising.

These flowers represent me as have moved through the programme which has inspired and revitalised me to be a positive voice of Community Nursing.

I chose a flower that arose from a bulb, as this could represent my journey:

- Flower defines how I bloomed whilst undertaking the QNI Executive Nurse Leadership Programme
- Bud indicates qualities that I'm working on and still developing
- Stem and leaves describe personal attributes that I have developed as I have become a more effective leader
- Bugs signify attributes that interfere with my professional growth and influence, which I seek to eliminate
- Roots and bulb identify how my journey developed into an Executive Community Nurse began
- Water represents the resources that nourish me and make me the best Community Nurse Leader I can be.

Sara's Biography

Sara is Interim Clinical Director at Berkshire Health Care NHS Foundation Trust responsible for the quality and safety of adult physical health community services.

Qualifying as a registered nurse in 1989, she has spent most of her career working in the community setting. Sara has always been passionate about improving patient experience and promoting excellence in community care.

Undertaking the District Nurse Specialist Practitioner training in 2004 was a catalyst for Sara's desire to positively influence District Nursing.

Since taking on leadership and management roles in the last 10 years, she has been able to have greater influence to achieve this ambition. Her aspiration is to have a stronger voice at national level.

Queen's Nurse: Michelle Johnson

Michelle's Reflections

I am incredibly proud to be a nurse. I have worked in the NHS for the last 34 years. I have spent over 22 years working in the community. I have worked in hospitals, community settings and in people's homes. I have worked at the point of care, operationally as well as now in an executive position, as a Chief Nurse. Sometimes, I have to remind myself all that I have achieved and that I am really good at being a nurse.

I am now very proud to lead across hospital and community and believe that this is the future of nurse leadership. I really understand how health and social care work and how to ensure that we provide the best for the people we care for.

I have learned such a lot during the Queen's Nurse Executive Leadership Programme. I have also met an inspiring group of Queen's Nurses who I aim to keep connected with. It was also good fun and I laughed a lot. The programme gave me the much needed time to focus on Me, Us (the team I work in) and the Community (wider perspective). I spent a lot of time thinking, which is not something that I have much time for in my working hours. What I most wanted to achieve was how I manage myself in the midst of the pressures of an Executive Nurse position and how to balance this with my home and family life.

Looking back at the programme some of the challenges I had was in the struggle I had to leave work behind and to wholeheartedly embrace 'being in the room'. As the programme moved through I got much better at doing this and also realised that the struggles I had were a reflection of the reality of my life and that this balance needs constant attention. I have learned to be more aware of my behaviours and have been struck with the phrase 'feelings drive behaviours' that I think of often.

I have focused on my observation skills and I became aware during the programme that others were so much more observing than me and that I could learn from them. We had some open conversations about focusing on what is going on in the room as well as what is being said.

What I took away...

FRIENDS and some new ways of thinking and being. How to be BRAVE and how to ask for feedback. The '+Even Better If' is a phrase that I now use often. Asking for feedback can be scary but can enhance what I do and say.

My final reflection, which I have shamelessly stolen from The Leadership Trust, is a quote that sums up my learning, 'Leadership is using our personal power



to win the hearts and minds of others to achieve a common purpose’.

My flower

When we decided to choose a flower to represent ourselves it made me understand that including creative thinking is very therapeutic. Snowdrops made me think of early spring and new beginnings. Every January I look for the first green shoots of the snowdrops and then they burst out with pride. It’s like they are shy and then show their full strength, beauty and worth.

Michelle’s Biography

Michelle has worked within the NHS in London as a registered adult and child nurse for her whole career spanning over 30 years. She has held senior operational management and nurse leadership posts in hospital, mental health and community health services across North London. Before joining Whittington Health in February 2018 as Chief Nurse and Director of Patient Experience she worked for

Barts Health NHS Trust as a Corporate Director of Nursing for Children & Young People.

At Whittington Health Michelle has professional responsibility for nursing care across the Trust in community and hospital settings. She is also the Director for Patient Experience and the Director of Infection Prevention and Control (DIPC). As a health system leader, Michelle is involved in service development and improvement as well as quality across the whole pathway of care.

She is a Queen’s Nurse has an MSc Child Health and has been a Florence Nightingale Children and Young People’s Leadership Scholar. She has sat on the Clinical Leadership Group for the Healthy London Partnership Children and Young People Programme. She is a Trustee on the Board of Directors for Roald Dahl’s Marvellous Children’s Charity.

Queen's Nurse: Penny Keith

Penny's Reflections

- Be my best more of the time.
- I have great personal power – don't give it away.
- Only when I know and can control myself can I lead others.
- Be aware of my intent / impact and look out for interferences.
- Helicopter view – oversight, monitor, and don't get pulled down into operational.
- Get out of the box – don't be trapped by emotions and my initial reactive response.
- Take time – push the space invaders back.
- Even better if ... What I appreciate about you is... And it would be even better if.
- Ask for feedback.

Us

- Do 'the right thing' – know what you stand for.
- For a team to be successful it has to have the right mind-set.
- Culture can enable.
- Plan and review:

Situation

Task

Options

Plan

- Trust = credibility + reliability + intimacy (care).
- Self-orientation.
- Only when we have trust can we achieve anything.
- Illness - Wellness by changing the 'I' to 'We'.

Community

- Purpose – quality patient care in the community.
- Resilience – need my own duvet to wrap round me to be able to hold onto my beliefs and deliver.
- Ask for feedback, don't just expect or give.
- What can WE do better so that we can be the driver of change.

My flower - Heather

Prefers open sunny sites and thrives in full sun but will grow in rocky areas and peaty barren land. Most often found in open moorland. Evergreen and hardy.

Food source for sheep and some deer. The nectar from the heather makes excellent honey.

Symbolises admiration and good luck ('lucky heather') and is said to have protective powers.



Penny's Biography

Penny is first and foremost a nurse who is passionate about delivering high quality and safe standards of care. She ensures that care is evidence-based and links with health, safety and governance. She is aware of the national policy drivers and the need to implement the recommendations from reports, such as the Francis Report, to achieve the best standards of care for the patient population. She is highly motivated and strives to motivate and enthuse her colleagues.

As the Deputy Associate Director of Nursing, Quality and Patient Experience for Local Partnerships in Nottinghamshire NHS Foundation Trust, Penny leads on clinical supervision, non-medical prescribing, research, and physical healthcare. She manages the Nursing and Midwifery Council and Chairs the SNAAC (Standing Nursing and Allied Health Professionals Council) which ensures that staff are consulted and heard within the organisation. She leads the link professional networks for continence, palliative care, safeguarding, tissue viability and infection prevention and control.

Penny has a long career within health care including working as a District Nurse, Practice Nurse, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, and Long Term Conditions Specialist. She has predominantly worked in the community in a variety of settings, including a walk-in centre, GP practices and as the nurse lead in a project for the homeless.

Penny sees supporting staff as integral to her role through ongoing professional support and training and in promoting staff ideas. Penny is innovative and loves working on new ideas and being at the forefront of changing practice. She has a long standing interest in the spiritual care of staff and patients and the importance of this for staff to maintain their resilience and ongoing personal development.

As a clinician who has worked in a diversity of settings Penny brings her knowledge and expertise to the direction of integrating mental and physical healthcare for patients in all areas of healthcare.

Queen's Nurse: Tracie McKelvie

Tracie's Reflections

The QN Executive Nurse Leadership Course,
Was now in my grasp, what a lucky Police Force!
By immersing my brain in a pool of mixed
knowledge
Would surely result in a recognised homage?!

To embark on this journey had me bursting with
pride,
An emotion so vibrant, I just couldn't hide!
My mind was alive, and my eyes held a glister
And I'd share my excitement with anyone who'd
listen!

The prospect of growing and expanding my skills
Gave rise for temptation, to believe that I WILL!
But in crept the doubt, could I keep up the stride?
My fears and my woes, I worked so hard to hide.

Then I quickly espied several furrowing brows
That revealed 'they' too, may not have the 'know
hows',

And so it emerged we're all in the same boat,
But with a passion and drive on which we all dote.

I observed and I listened as I eyed the mixed bunch,
They were really quite clever; and that wasn't a
hunch.

With varying backgrounds, advancement ensued,
And it quickly transpired I wasn't that far removed!

My Strategic Nurse platform quickly came into form,
Of which I embraced; it felt rather the norm!
And it didn't take long for my fears to diminish,
'Imposter syndrome'! We're pretty much finished!

So the blossom that represents what I believe,
Is the delicate and fragrant virtue of Sweet Pea,
Which reminds me of days where I mentored the
new,
And watched with such pride when from the nest
they all flew.

And here now I seek a reciprocal favour,
From my Exec. Queen's Nurse Colleagues, forever
the braver,

For a collaborative link is the key to success,
Where we'll THRIVE, we'll ACHIEVE and we'll just be
THE BEST!

Tracie's Biography

Tracie started her career in care in 1989, and commenced her general adult nursing training in 1991 at the University Hospital of Wales. Tracie has built upon her knowledge base and skill sets which she has learnt over time are all hugely transferable and so very valuable. Tracie does not just provide a service; being a nurse is a significant part of who she is and what she believes in. Tracie acts with compassion, empathy, respect, honesty and integrity, and not just in nursing but in her everyday life.

In 2002, Tracie chose to specialise in Occupational Health Nursing undertaking her Specialist Practitioner Degree and upon doing so, she continued to be successful in setting up an Occupational Health service for an educational environment. Tracie has remained in this specialist area of nursing ever since and having undertaken various lead roles in Occupational Health as well as leading on specialist projects for organisations, she is now the Occupational Health Lead for a Police Service. Tracie has been working with the Police for 6 years and she confidently takes the lead on some collaborative work with other Welsh forces. Tracie is fully committed to ensuring that the needs of Police Officers and staff remain high on the organisation's health agenda.

Tracie strives for excellence in delivering high

standards of care and empowering individuals to be the best that they can be, and having been awarded the Queen's Nurse title in June of 2018 this further embedded Tracie's pride in her work; she is incredibly proud to be a part of this unique and well respected profession.

Her values, commitment and understanding were further recognised in April of 2019, where she received a Commendation Award from the Chief Constable of her Police Force for her part in demonstrating an exceptional level of support to all staff and officers deployed, and being integral in ensuring that their mental and physical wellbeing was preserved in the most difficult and challenging of circumstances.

In addition to the Nursing and Midwifery Council, Tracie is a member of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), the Occupational Health Nurse Association for the Police Service (OHNAPS), and she is an associate member of the Society of Occupational Health Medicine (SOM). Tracie initiated the set-up of the West Wales Occupational Health Group (WWOHG) in 2002 and she sits on special interest groups being vocal on papers sent out for consultation and that influence policy development in Occupational Health. Tracie is also a Volunteer Ambassador for Police Care UK, a charity that represents and supports Police Officers and staff who have been injured as part of their policing duties.

Queen's Nurse: Helen Mehra

Helen's Reflections

What the programme means to me

Good leaders are memorable and excellent leaders are unforgettable. I remember reading this just before I embarked on the programme on a cold winter's day in December 2018 and this was one of my strongest motivations as we started on the programme.

My personal reflections

- Leadership development is an investment in my future and we need to nurture future leaders.
- I will inspire nurses to do their best work at all times.
- I will understand my teams emotionally and be prepared and committed to making better decisions by performing at the highest possible levels of emotional intelligence.
- The programme has taught me to use empathy and to learn and practice new behaviours.
- I will empower and engage my teams to offer to challenge in a safe and encouraging environment.
- I will make an impact on my personal and organisational roles.
- I will stop listening passively and to be able to interact with conversation in all situations even at the highest levels of engagement.
- Learning, practicing and developing new ways of thinking, even in a busy and hectic schedule, will help me to understand the daily events of ever shifting demands.
- I will step out of the box and look around.
- Make space to try new things, new ideas, new people.
- Be brave.
- Find my voice.
- Continue to care for each other.
- Be at the table.
- Create safe listening spaces.
- Be confident.
- Remember that every day, I am 'just' a Nurse.



Helen's Biography

Helen has been Lead nurse for Buckinghamshire healthcare NHS trust for over four years, nursing for 34 years. Her current role leads integrated elderly and community care division, supporting the Trust to develop and deliver its vision of delivering care closer to home.

Helen started her career working in a community hospital achieving a qualification in tropical medicine which led onto midwifery training. After qualifying as a midwife, Helen supported the mother and child project in a rural community in Trinidad before travelling to the Himalayas to work as a volunteer midwife. Returning to India in 1995, she spent four

years managing a community health project. In 2015, she galvanised the local community to send clothes and vital supplies to communities in Nepal affected by a devastating earthquake. Her dedication to nursing is in providing compassionate and excellent clinical care to patients both in the UK and developing countries.

Back in the UK, Helen qualified as a Community Practice Teacher. She completed the Mary Seacole post graduate qualification in healthcare leadership, and became matron of a community hospital for a year, but community is where her passion lies, so she became a Community Matron Generalist in 2009. She is growing in confidence and is ready for new ventures.

Queen's Nurse: Debbie Myers

Debbie's Reflections **Riding the waves**

I'm on a shady path picking my way through mud, roots and stones. Isolated, alone. There's someone close behind me - I can't see him but he's there, ever present and getting nearer, stronger.

And then something amazing happens - the path ahead of me becomes brighter. The canopy overhead begins to thin and the sun is shining through the overhanging branches. I look closer and can see splashes of colour ahead. As I get nearer I realise it's a wonderful array of flowers all in various stages of bloom and all vibrant and strong.

I continue along the path with renewed confidence encouraged by the blooms all around me and I no longer feel alone. I feel their support as I navigate the uncertain path and their strength and resilience inspires me to keep going. I know that these blooms aren't normally found together in one place but somehow it feels right - like different pieces coming together to make a whole, gaining strength from each other to grow ever brighter and bolder.

I continue to navigate the path with my new companions by my side. At times it's difficult and we flounder but we get right back on track, each time learning, growing and getting stronger. I realise the

path is no longer so uneven and I've learned to hurdle the obstacles with ease- I had it in me all along - who knew!

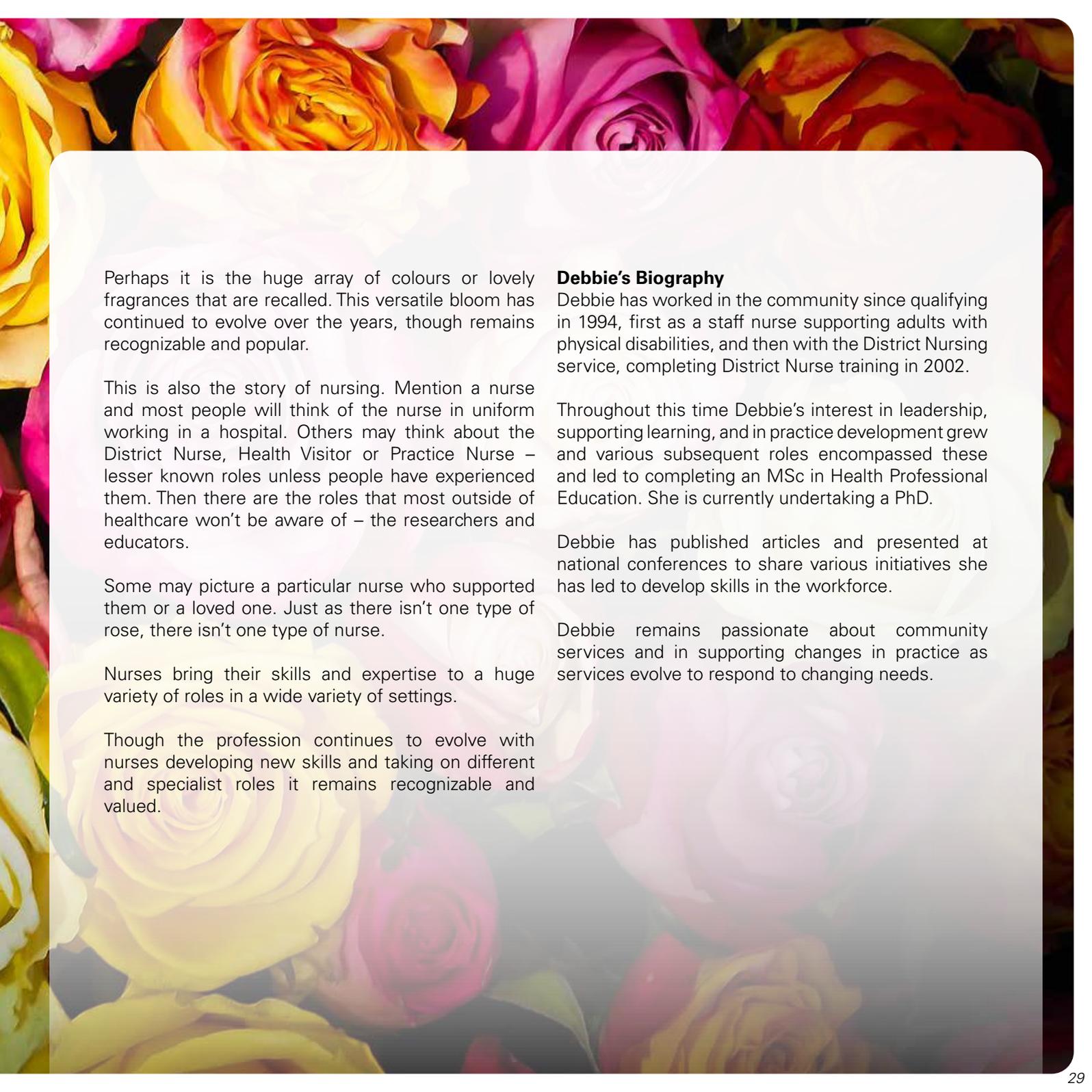
The shadow that's been haunting me has all but disappeared though I know he's not far away and will be back if I allow it. But I now know how to keep strong and fight him off.

The sun's coming out and I find myself at the end of this particular path as it opens onto a wide sandy beach. As I run towards the waves I'm aware that I can jump over many of them, and though I know some may knock me down I now have the skills and confidence to get straight back up.

The horizon stretches before me in every direction and I know I can take any one of these I want to start a journey down a bright new path

The Rose

Mention a rose and most people can conjure up an image of this wonderful flower. For many this may be the beautiful rose buds often found in bouquets and given on Valentine's Day, but for others one of the many other less well known varieties may come to mind – perhaps an Old English Rose in full bloom, a beautiful climbing rose or indeed a miniature rose.



Perhaps it is the huge array of colours or lovely fragrances that are recalled. This versatile bloom has continued to evolve over the years, though remains recognizable and popular.

This is also the story of nursing. Mention a nurse and most people will think of the nurse in uniform working in a hospital. Others may think about the District Nurse, Health Visitor or Practice Nurse – lesser known roles unless people have experienced them. Then there are the roles that most outside of healthcare won't be aware of – the researchers and educators.

Some may picture a particular nurse who supported them or a loved one. Just as there isn't one type of rose, there isn't one type of nurse.

Nurses bring their skills and expertise to a huge variety of roles in a wide variety of settings.

Though the profession continues to evolve with nurses developing new skills and taking on different and specialist roles it remains recognizable and valued.

Debbie's Biography

Debbie has worked in the community since qualifying in 1994, first as a staff nurse supporting adults with physical disabilities, and then with the District Nursing service, completing District Nurse training in 2002.

Throughout this time Debbie's interest in leadership, supporting learning, and in practice development grew and various subsequent roles encompassed these and led to completing an MSc in Health Professional Education. She is currently undertaking a PhD.

Debbie has published articles and presented at national conferences to share various initiatives she has led to develop skills in the workforce.

Debbie remains passionate about community services and in supporting changes in practice as services evolve to respond to changing needs.

Queen's Nurse: Jane Naismith

Jane's Reflections

Experiments to aid learning
X-Factor, how to make a difference
Examples of great practice
Community at its heart
United in common purpose
Tasks – grip self – grip task
Immersive learning environment
Vision shared
Exploration of self

Nurture and challenge
United in quest to promote the Queen's Nurse title
Right to be at the table
Shared vision
Extraordinary nurses

Lifelong learning
EBI+ (Even better if)
Ambassador of the QNI
Dilts models
Empowering
Real Change
Shared stories
Helicopter view
Imposter syndrome banished
Purposeful leadership

Jane's Biography

Jane originally trained in Dundee, qualifying in 1987. Her early nursing career focused on medicine and community care where she developed a passion for palliative care.

Jane has worked in palliative care for the past 18 years, starting as a band 5 support nurse with a hospice at home team, progressing to CNS and Palliative Care Education Lead with a combined acute and community NHS Trust.

She remained with the Trust and progressed through a variety of management and leadership role firstly as Matron and then Lead Nurse for Palliative and End of Life care.

In 2016, Jane left the NHS to become the Community Nurse Consultant at St Joseph's Hospice in Hackney. When her line manager was leaving a year later, she persuaded Jane to apply for her role and in 2018 Jane was appointed Director of Clinical Services.

Jane has a passion for community care, is a Queen's Nurse and believes that Nurse Specialists play a vital role in supporting other community practitioners to provide safe and effective care. Jane also has a strong interest in nursing leadership and promoting leadership at all levels and has undertaken further study with the NHS Leadership Academy as well as completing the QNI Executive Nurse Leadership Programme.

Queen's Nurse: Yemi Osho

Yemi's Reflections

My leadership aspirations and commitment are to continue to alleviate suffering and raise awareness of the impact of Diabetes complications. This has ignited my desire to set up a Diabetes charity. Of course leading any enterprise is always a challenge. The thought of leading a new organisation felt like a minefield and beyond my capacity. Hence my motivation to apply for the QNI Executive Nurse Leadership Programme (ENLP) in order to gain new skills and renew energy to broaden my horizons, critical thinking and problem solving approach.

I have learned through the ENLP that leadership is like a green pasture. It is about cultivating new ideas. Planting new seeds requires cultivating, pruning, watering and flowers depend on these principles to bloom.

To be an effective leader you have to constantly develop, evolve, adopt new ways of thinking and scan through new horizons throughout your journey. Of course, motivating others is about gaining their trust and commitment to drive the charity agenda to help accelerate the pace of change in leading a new organisation.

As healthcare is constantly changing and is currently in a state of flux due to demographic changes, advances in technology and long term conditions; it requires being politically astute and economically

savvy. It also requires adaptation and paradigm shift utilising the 'Helicopter' and 'BIRD' tools.

The drive for successful outcomes particularly taking up new leadership challenges also requires influencing upward, downward and sideways through networking and collaboration of stakeholders. It also requires self-awareness and stepping out of the artificial box when emotional thoughts of hopelessness arise.

No matter what a leader's strategy or vision is, it can only be achieved with the combined efforts of everyone involved. Leadership is about accountability; being purpose-driven, building trust, nurturing relationships, credibility, reliability and intimacy. Being a good leader and role model is very important. With my aspiration to continue to serve humanity, I plan to do everything I can to help drive sustainable changes within community nursing.

My hope for the future is to continue to lead and inspire others rather than being a passive bystander. For these reasons, the knowledge and skills that I have gained through the programme will strengthen my leadership style to effect sustainable change.

I am inspired by the red Hibiscus flower due to several properties as a model organism. This includes its symbol of love, culinary, aesthetic and healing power. These attributes embody my values and inspiration to continue to make a difference in people's lives.



The rainbow colours of Hibiscus also represent my personality of warmth, love, passion and caring. Despite Hibiscus' unique qualities, it is also a thirsty plant that only thrives or blossoms if given enough water. I believe as leaders we have to nurture others to win hearts and minds to germinate new ideas and realise our vision.

Yemi's Biography

Councillor Yemi Osho is a distinguished Midwife, Nurse Practitioner and Queen's Nurse of over 30 years. She holds a DipHE in Health Promotion, Diploma Tissue Viability, BSc (Hons) Specialist Practitioner Community Nursing, PGDiP (Merit) Advanced Nursing Practice and MSc Health Services Management. She is a visionary, problem-solving oriented leader and mentor. She has been at the forefront of nursing and worked in various capacities as Nurse Practitioner including senior management and board roles in the NHS. She has served on two CCG boards in London and Director of Nursing. She is Founder/CEO of Diabetes Action Group and Rotvic Consultancy.

Councillor for Lea Bridge Ward since 2014 and past Mayor of London Borough of Waltham Forest, Yemi has worked tirelessly in bringing members of our diverse community together, raising awareness of the consequences of Diabetes and setting up Diabetes Support Group locally.

She has contributed immensely over 25 years to the work of the Royal College of Nursing, twice elected to London Regional Board, nurturing and developing nursing leaders including Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Nurses. Co-pioneer of the Equality and Diversity Group and has continued to be a voice for BME nurses as a member of Chief Nursing Officer National BME Advisory Group. As a member of the group, she contributed to the call for implementation of Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) to ensure employees from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds have equal access to career opportunities and receive fair treatment in the workplace.

Yemi was awarded National 'Activist of the Year' in 2013 in recognition of her philanthropic and charitable work in supporting the less privileged in the community to achieve health and well being. In 2017, she was awarded the Community Excellence Award by the Nigerian Nurses Charitable Association and Honorary Exemplary Diaspora Leadership Award. She recently received the Excellence Award in March 2019 in recognition of her dedication and influence in shaping the NHS.

Queen's Nurse: Salli Pilcher

Salli's Reflections

Snowdrops

You lived in rhythm with the land
A rural farming life
On a hill above the grey Irish Sea
A life shaped by the weather
Seasons and animals
A life filled with plants and flowers.

You telephoned us to share your joy
The first swallow to return
The first aconites, the first spring calf
The first bluebells
But always to tell us of the first snowdrops.

The snowdrop bringing hope
The end of a hard winter
Signs of spring, new life
Their little white heads
pushing through the frozen earth
Beautiful, resilient, delicate,
yet so strong, just like you.

You faced ovarian cancer
Just like you approached life
With faith, strength,
resilience and hope.
Days turned into months,
Months turned into years
Years almost marking a decade
The snowdrops each spring marked each
milestone

Each year bringing hope.
But the cancer was also resilient,
Strong and relentless
Long forgotten, buried deep, it returned.
There were missed opportunities...
Gallstones?? Scar tissue??
Lessons to be learnt....
You said you weren't ready
We weren't ready.
You fought hard
You waited and watched
For those little white heads
Pushing through the frozen earth
Another year, another spring, hope?
But as their delicate white heads opened
Hanging like tears dropping to the ground
You closed your eyes and left us...

Your snowdrops still come each spring
They push through the frozen earth
They multiply and spread
Signalling spring, new life
Another year, but it's another year without
you.

We miss you more than words describe
But your snowdrops bring us comfort
Special memories
They celebrated the life of a remarkable lady
A lady that was my Aunt and Friend.

You would have been so proud of me
A Senior Nurse
A Queen's Nurse
A nurse committed to learning
To delivering high quality care
A nurse shaped by your fight against cancer
A nurse shaped by your love, by your life
A nurse shaped by snowdrops.

Thank you to the Queen's Nursing Institute and to the National Garden Scheme for investing in me through the Executive Nurse Leadership Programme.

The programme has stretched me, unpicked me and put me together again in ways I never imagined. Sharing the experience with seventeen inspirational executive nurses has forged friendships and networks that will last a lifetime.

I arrived on the course as a QN and I left as part of the QNI family. To any Queen's Nurse reading this.. Live by your values, stay true to your beliefs, listen to your patients, use your personal and professional power to make a difference, use your voice, be heard, be at the table. We will be right there with you...

Salli's Biography

Salli has been working in the community for over 20 years and has been a Queen's Nurse since 2015. Salli was awarded the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Award for Outstanding Service in 2016 following nomination by a member of her staff who highlighted her exceptional leadership during and in the aftermath of the devastating Cumbrian Floods caused by Storm Desmond.

Salli is currently Associate Director of Nursing in the North Cumbria Integrated Care System, with a responsibility for community services, including Community Nursing, Community Hospitals, Community Rehabilitation Services and UTC's across North Cumbria. She is passionate about delivering high quality, safe services to patients in their own homes or as close to home as possible, and feels very privileged and proud to be part of such a fantastic community team in North Cumbria.

Salli is married to Adrian and mum to Matthew and lives on the beautiful West Coast of Cumbria. She is a Foundation Governor at St Begas School Eskdale, a small rural Primary School set in the foothills of Scafell. She is an active member and Past Lady Captain of Seascale Golf Club, where she enjoys playing with her husband and son, plays competitively for the ladies' silver team and loves working with other members to help young people get into golf.

Queen's Nurse: Denise Thiruchelvam

Denise's Reflections

When in 2018 I was offered my first Director of Nursing job, I was delighted, ecstatic. It was everything I was looking for. Life was coming together. I was starting the role after maternity leave following the birth of my daughter in January.

In my usual style, I planned for my new role, due diligence and research. I applied to the QNI Executive Nurse Leadership course, applications, interviews and the long outcome waiting. Then the email came, a squeak of excitement. I was going to meet peers who worked in the community and understood those specific challenges.

Whilst waiting to start my first DoN role the anxiety started to take over. Who applies for their first DoN post in a challenged organisation off maternity leave? I started to doubt myself and spiral into an unhealthy cycle of thoughts. Anxiety which I use as a driver was not being directed in a healthy mode and I was beginning to get the start of panic attacks which I have had in the past. My thinking brain was being illogical and I was struggling to control the emotional reactions.

I arrived in Ross-on-Wye in December and was presented with 17 other fabulous but intimidating

nurse leaders who I thought were going to find me out at any minute.

My green group have been kind, challenging and honest friends, with a gentle but firm steer of Sharon. The team know I found the 'experiments' infuriating because we didn't discuss what the correct answer was - which is not the point of experiential learning. 'Let it go' from the Frozen theme tune was sung to me when I had a little rant of frustration.

Then we discussed the chimp in the box and the penny dropped for me. It was incredibly powerful tool for me. Also imposter syndrome is real to me and I will find ways to manage it going forward.

My objective of the QNI programme was to embrace my authentic leadership and not be crippled by anxiety. I have my own leadership style which is integral to my personality. I do not need to pretend to be another person. It's okay that it is not like other leaders. I have something to contribute; I can bring my peers with me.

I know the early years in this post will be a difficult, but I am very excited about the challenges and opportunities ahead. I know it will be hard and I need to ensure I have the resilience to be for my family,

work and my own personal wellbeing.

Thank you to QNI and the National Garden Scheme for making this course available. It has been invaluable for me.

Denise's Biography

Denise worked as Director of Nursing and Quality at CSH Surrey since February 2019. Denise is a Nurse and Health Visitor by background.

Trained at University of Liverpool, Denise returned to London where she specialised in accident and emergency, public health and health protection nursing.

Denise worked as a Health Visitor in South London after completing a MSc in Public Health, specialising in epidemiology and communicable disease control. Denise then moved to the Health Protection Agency (HPA) as Health Protection Nurse Specialist.

Denise moved to commissioning health care services at Harrow Primary Care Trust and then to Harrow and Barnet Local Government as a Public Health Specialist

for health protection, children and maternity services. She worked nationally for the former Chief Nursing Officer on the Health Visitor Call to Action programme where she was awarded a Fellowship by the Institute of Health Visiting.

Recently Denise worked as Lead for Patient Safety and Quality then Deputy Chief Nurse for First Community Health and Care C.I.C. She is a Queen's Nurse, an Independent Registrant for Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Fitness to Practice and an active member of the RCN Public Health Forum steering group.

Denise believes in the values of social enterprises, where every employee has a voice to shape the future of the organisation, passionate about public health, staff experience, patient safety and providing integrated care, putting the individual at the heart of healthcare.

Denise is the Professional Lead for Nursing and the Executive Lead for Quality, Patient Safety and Safeguarding.

Q&N Executive Nurse Leadership Recipe for Success

A consolidation poem and symbolic representation of each of the QN's flowers, by Tracie McKelvie.

1. **Anemone** - symbolises protection
2. **Cornflower** - symbolises wealth, prosperity, fortune and friendship
3. **Clover** - symbolises faith, hope and luck
4. **Crocus** - symbolises cheerfulness and glee vibrant colour
5. **Daffodil** - symbolises rebirth and new beginnings
6. **Dahlia** - symbolises perfection, strength, power, royalty and dignity
7. **Daisy** - symbolises innocence and purity
8. **Gerbera** - symbolises 5th most popular flower in the world; innocence, purity and cheerfulness
9. **Heather** - symbolises admiration and good luck
10. **Hellebore** - symbolises serenity, tranquillity and peace
11. **Hibiscus** - symbolises acknowledgement, personal glory, perfection
12. **Lily** - symbolises humanity and devotion
13. **Madagascar Jasmine** - symbolises fragrance and marriage
14. **Poppy** - symbolises sleep, peace and death
15. **Rose** - symbolises balance, promise, hope and new beginnings, the thorns symbolise defence
16. **Snowdrop** - symbolises hope and warmth
17. **Sweetpea** - symbolises delicate pleasure, delicate fragrance, appreciation

The sleepy and tranquil terrain, we may find,
Is defined by the **Poppy**, and appealing to mind
And serenity and peace that ensues our desires
Gives room for the **Hellebore's** place in our attire.

BUT to prompt new beginnings of change, if you will
We'll start our concoction with a rich **Daffodil**,
Whilst maintaining our warmth, and our faith in the crop,
The next vital bud is a pretty **Snowdrop**.

For admiration and luck in the storms that we'll weather
In next we shall trickle a dollop of **Heather**,
Then into the urn we'll fold in a **Lily**
Where humanity and devotion remain the propinquity.

To maintain our strength, balance promise and power,
Into the mix a royal **Dahlia** we'll shower,
And while we are stirring, our thoughts marinade
For a reflection of Leadership enhances our grade.

As the mixture infuses our symbolic traits,
Sweetpea descends in, to fragrant our plates,
Then into the spill on this cheerfulness bus
We'll sieve in a vivid and vibrant **Crocus**.

For added protection an **Anemone** floats in
That will keep us all strong, in doing the right thing.
And in keeping us visible, where our voices are heard,
Let's throw in some **Gerberas**; known all over the world.

As the mix of success prepares to condense,
A sprinkle of **Rose** thorns will maintain our defence,
And in using our allies to safeguard our power,
We'll grate into the mix a bouquet of **Cornflower**.

But to balance our strengths, virtue and purity,
A chain we shall merge with an authentic **Daisy**
And in keeping in symmetry with our Leadership traits,
This will surely make certain our successful fate.

In nearing the end of our Leadership binding,
Our varying styles, we each need reminding,
To maintain the sweet fragrance and bond, like a marriage,
Madagascan Jasmine is the ultimate carriage.

To keep faith, hope and luck constantly bubbling over,
We'll sprinkle the top with a vast bunch of **Clover**,
And in finally ensuring acknowledgement and perfection,
The **Hibiscus** rests proudly to mould our concoction!

From all the nurses involved in this book: 'We would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Crystal Oldman and Sharon Aldridge-Bent for recognising and supporting community and primary care lead nurses who have the potential to become strategic executive leaders of the future. We would like to thank George Plumptre and the National Garden Scheme for choosing to support The QNI, to continue their ongoing commitment in improving primary and community care.'



The
Queen's
Nursing
Institute

www.qni.org.uk
www.ngs.org.uk

