**How to capture a moment in history? The Royal College of Nursing digital archive**

M25 Conference Poster (online) – Dawn Williams, Collections Development Specialist, Royal College of Nursing

This poster describes the joint efforts of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) library and archive teams to capture, preserve and make accessible the work of the RCN via its digital archive. In particular, it illustrates the steps taken to manage the life-cycle of publications from publication to preservation.

The RCN has published reports, guidance and policies in support of its members since it was first established in 1916. Today the RCN is nation-wide with over 450,000 members. The need to provide timely support to its members has resulted in a growing number of publications produced each year and a corresponding rise in born-digital publications. The challenge for the library and archive team is to capture and preserve this output. At the same time the life-cycle of publications must be managed to ensure that users are aware of what is current practice and what is not. The digital archive has become a valuable tool in tackling these challenges.

Managing the life-cycle of publications and making them available via the digital archive is a cross-departmental effort including the Membership, Communications, Website and Library and Archive teams. Publication details are recorded in the RCN’s Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system by the Membership Administration team. Monthly CRM reports identify publications at the end of their review period and are sent to all teams involved in publishing and distributing them. Publications rendered obsolete are removed from the website, print copies are removed from the library lending collections with one copy added to the library store where it is held in perpetuity.

Watermarked versions of the publications are uploaded to the public area of the digital archive indicating to users that they are not accessing the latest advice. Library catalogue records are updated with the digital archive URLs, redirecting users to the archive.

The role of the digital archive is expanding, a member-only area was launched this year providing access to the RCN’s annual congress resources, allowing members to trace the development of RCN policies. During lockdown the archive team are capturing the RCN’s response to the impact of the pandemic, including using the archive to capture the RCN’s COVID-19 dedicated web pages. The library team will begin a programme of digitising older publications, aiming to create a significant online collection of over 6000 publications.