

# Paid equally badly? Gender and pay in the nursing profession

Dr Anne Laure Humbert

Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice

Oxford Brookes University

Rachael McIlroy

Royal College of Nursing

## Acknowledgements

Based on the work of Kate Clayton-Hathway, Heather Griffiths,  
Anne Laure Humbert, Rachael McIlroy, Sue Schutz

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# Nursing, a profession in crisis?

RCN research consistently shows members feel undervalued

Pay does not match:

- level of responsibility, autonomy, accountability
- stress, pressure and demands
- skills and levels of education and training
- increasing scope of practice

Alarm at lack of voice in responses to staffing shortages and ‘failures’ in care

# Nursing, a profession in crisis?

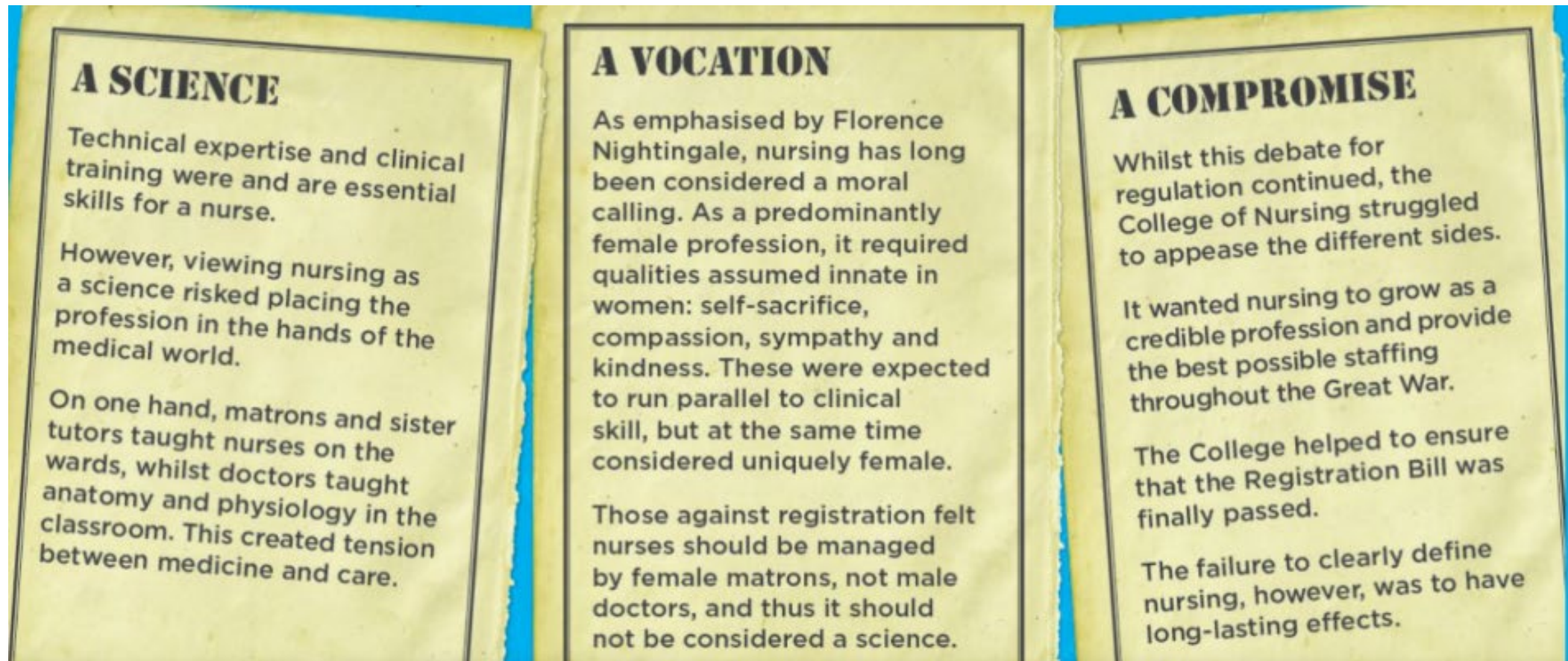
High level of vacancies - why doesn't this lead to higher wages?

Over 40,000 vacancies in the NHS in England

=

1 in 9 jobs

Supply and demand should influence wages:  
what's so different about nursing?



# What is a profession?

Occupational boundaries and closure	Knowledge claims	Autonomy and control over work processes and practices
<i>what is the role of registration?</i>	<i>what counts as nursing knowledge?</i>	<i>how much control in light of service needs?</i>

Clear move towards professionalisation in the case of nursing

But less successful than other groups, e.g. pharmacists, in showing that professionalisation is central to their roles

A possible explanation for the persistence of low pay?

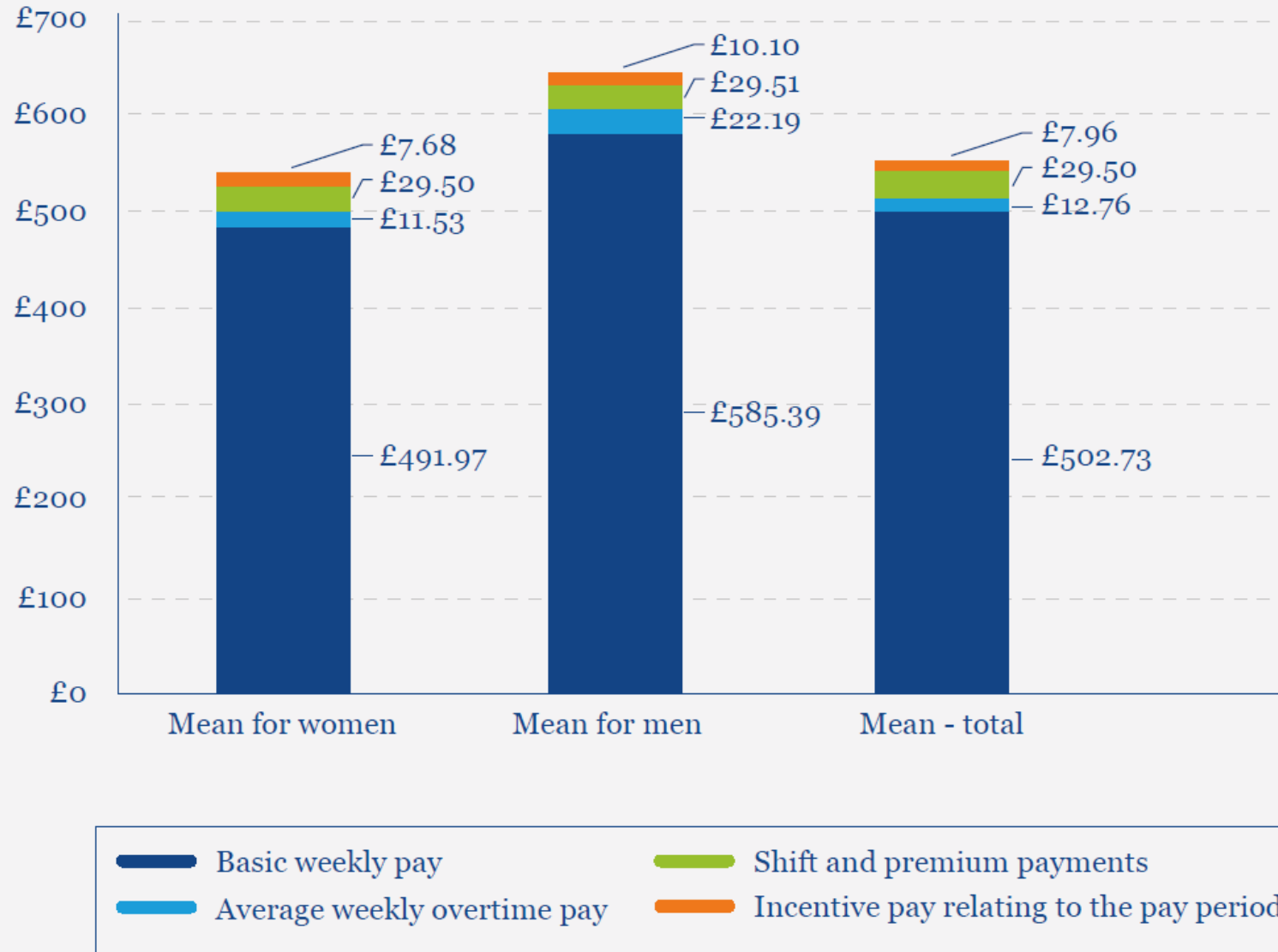
	Weekly		Hourly	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Nursing professionals	£526.58	£182.24	£15.42	£4.32
Health care managers	£941.80	£522.90	£24.53	£12.59
Health professionals	£883.76	£511.39	£24.84	£13.08
Allied health professionals	£550.95	£202.16	£17.70	£5.56
Scientific, therapeutic and technical	£447.06	£225.99	£12.86	£5.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>£650.67</b>	<b>£384.52</b>	<b>£18.71</b>	<b>£9.68</b>

Source: QLFS 2018 Q1

Notes: weighted by income weight 2017 (PIWT17)



**Figure 4: Average gross weekly earnings among nurses by category of pay and sex**



Source: ASHE 2018

n = 4,455 for women, n = 580 for men, n = 5,035 in total



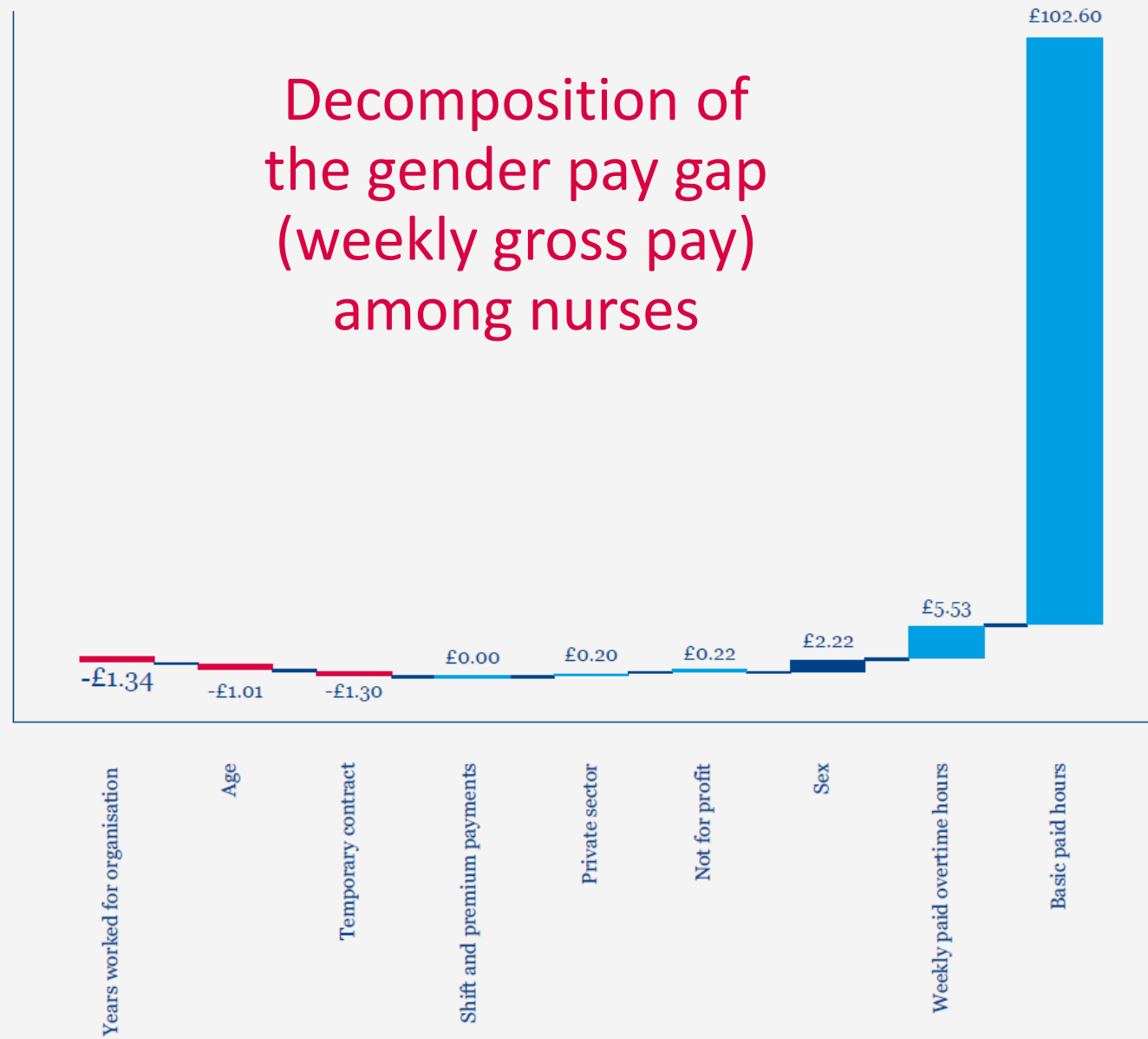
the gender pay gap  
among nurses is

**17%**



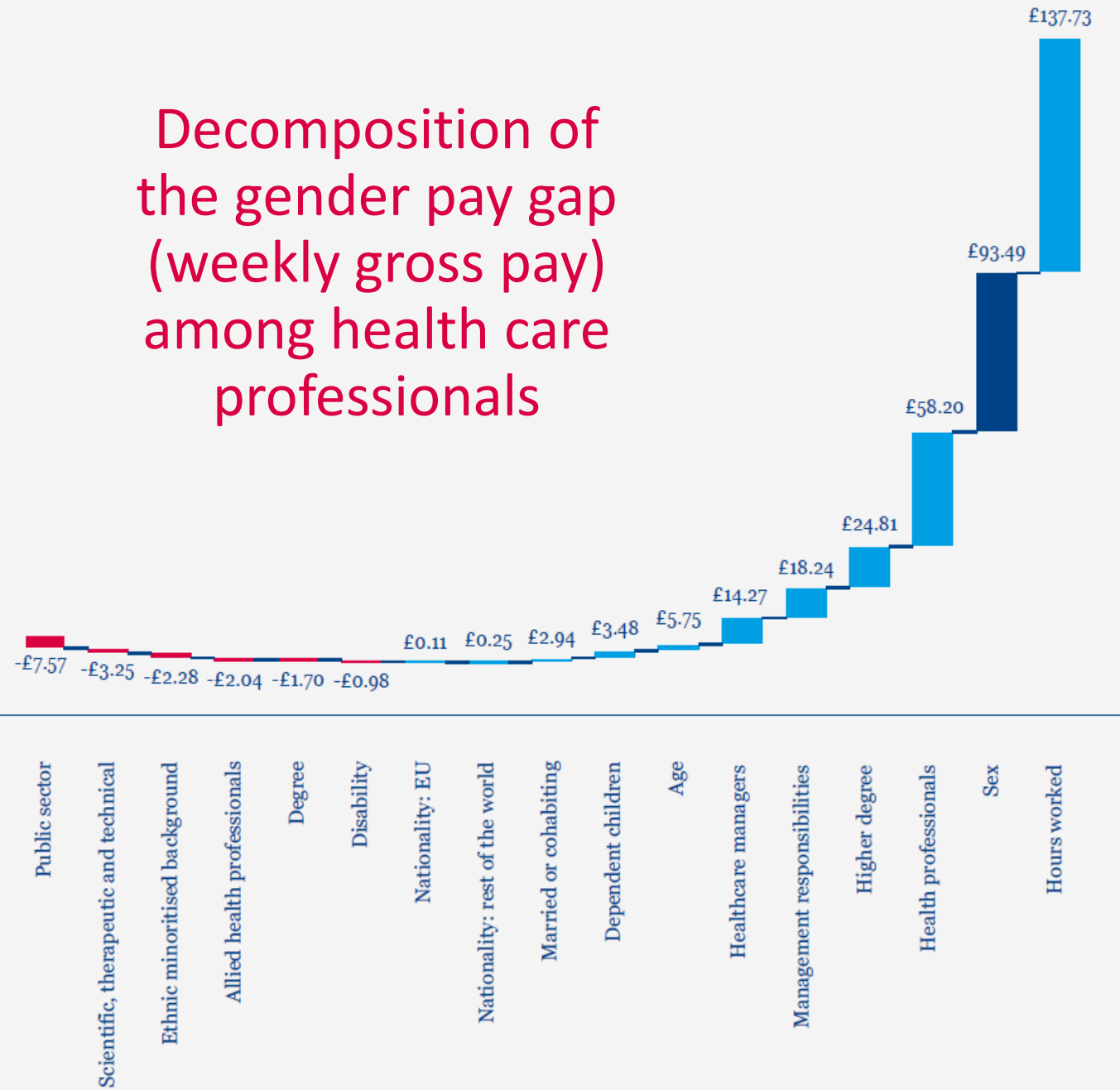
**95%**  
reduction  
in pay gap if women and  
men worked the same  
number of hours

## Decomposition of the gender pay gap (weekly gross pay) among nurses



Source: ASHE 2018

## Decomposition of the gender pay gap (weekly gross pay) among health care professionals



# Ethnic pay gap

Nurses from an ethnic minority group earn a similar amount to white nurses on an hourly basis but earn more on a weekly basis

£566 vs £515,  $p = 0.06$

This is clearly related to the fact that they work more hours (36 vs 32 hours on average,  $p < 0.01$ )



**10% less**

BAME nurses earn 10% less than white colleagues, when other factors such as working hours are considered

# The voice of senior stakeholders in the nursing profession

Complex challenges impacting the nursing profession:

- Growth in the number of unregistered health care workers/nurses
- Dilution of the registered nursing role and increasingly diverse range of tasks carried out by nurses
- Increasing number of nurses that choose flexibility over career development

# Senior stakeholders' views on potential solutions

- Greater engagement from leaders and managers in enabling more inclusive and adaptive working environments
- Nursing leader input and influence in national policy development and in the workplace itself
- RCN's role in protecting and enhancing the profession's knowledge and skills



While the professionalisation of nursing has made great progress, the consolidation of the status of nursing as a profession can only be achieved by addressing two issues in parallel:

- questions of knowledge claims – what skills are at the heart of the nursing profession
- the autonomy and control of work – how work and working time are organised.

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