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**New Turbulence in the NMC: CEO resigns
followed by the Director of Standards and
Registration**

It seems that our colleagues of the British Nursing and Midwifery Council are again severely tested, the second time in the last five years.

The 12th of this January in fact, it was announced that the CEO, **Professor Dickon Weir-Hughes**, has resigned with immediate effect for “personal reasons” after a period of sick leave. A lot of speculation is going on regarding the real reasons of Professor Weir-Hughes decision. According to the “Nursing Times”, the former CEO has been an advocate of the need for tighter regulation of healthcare assistants. He was quoted in the Times last September as having said hospital wards could face a “ghastly national disaster” because of a growing number of unregulated HCAs. But in a letter to Nursing Times last week,

professor Hazell, NMC Chairman, “clarified” the Body’s position on regulating HCAs, appearing to row back from earlier comments made by Professor Weir-Hughes.

Other informed observers suggest serious disagreements between Professor Weir-Hughes and the NMC Board in a context marked by continuing negative reports on the British Regulatory Body of Nurses by the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence of the UK (CHRE).

Less than two weeks after the CEO’s departure, Director of Standards and Registration **Roger Thompson** has resigned as well. The NMC declined to give a reason for his decision.

According to “Nursing Times”, their departure leaves Director of Education **Rita Newland** as the only member of the NMC’s executive team with a nursing background. Director of fitness to Practise **Jackie Smith** has in fact been appointed interim Chief Executive Officer, while assistant Director of Policy and Standards, our friend Dr. **Katerina Kolyva** is acting up in Mr Thompson’s role. Neither have been on the nursing register.

Royal College of Nursing Head of policy, Mr. **Howard Catton** told Nursing Times it was “crucial” there was “strong professional nursing leadership” as part of the NMC’s senior team. Unison Head of Nursing, **Gail Adams** said: “There is an insufficient number of nurses at the NMC at a senior level...registrants will be concerned whether they have an understanding of the issues.”

Ordem Dos Enfermeiros (Portugal) has a new President

The Portuguese Regulatory Body for Nursing has a new President and Executive Board, following their elections of the 12th of last December. Mr. **Germano Couto** was elected as President, replacing Ms. Maria Augusta de Sousa, that many of us have met in person.

The new President run his campaign on five main points: A) Bringing closer the Regulatory Body for Nurses and society. B) Modernizing the internal structure of the Regulatory Body. C) Promoting the social visibility and a positive image of Nursing. D) Defend and regulate the professional exercise of the nurses. And finally E) intervening in the qualifications and development of skills.

Seven lists of candidates have competed for this election. Former President Maria Augusta de Sousa is not a part of the new Board.

For further information: <http://www.ordemenfermeiros.pt>