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Statement: Five Years On: Reflecting on the lasting impact of COVID-19 on Critical Care nurses and patients

In early March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 outbreak a global pandemic. As we mark five years since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we reflect on the profound and lasting impact it has had on both Critical Care nurses and the patients they care for. Critical Care nurses, who were on the frontlines of this unprecedented health crisis, faced immense challenges — working tirelessly in high-stress environments, grappling with severe staff shortages, and often enduring emotional and physical burnout. Their resilience, dedication, and compassion were tested in ways they had never encountered, with many experiencing trauma, grief, and exhaustion after caring for critically ill patients day in and day out.

For patients, the pandemic brought a new level of uncertainty and fear. The isolation of being separated from family and friends, combined with the severity of illness, often intensified the emotional burden of those fighting for their lives. Despite these challenges, the commitment of Critical Care nurses, alongside our healthcare colleagues, ensured that countless patients received the best care possible, often in the most trying of circumstances.

As we look back, we honour the strength of Critical Care nurses and recognize the enduring impact of this crisis on both healthcare professionals and the patients they serve. Their courage, compassion, and commitment will continue to be a touchstone for healthcare resilience and recovery in the years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicki Credland".

Nicki Credland
Chair UKCCNA