

Sharon White OBE is to retire as Chief Executive Officer of the School and Public Health Nurses Association (SAPHNA)

Tuesday 28 January, 2025

Board of Trustees Communication

Sharon White OBE is to retire as Chief Executive Officer of the School and Public Health Nurses Association (SAPHNA). Ms White is to step down from her role as CEO 31 January 2025.

Following a period of extended sick leave, Sharon has reached the difficult decision to retire. She has worked for over 45 years, serving as a nurse, midwife, and specialist community public health nurse (school nurse).

SAPHNA was Sharon's brainchild, set up over 18 years ago during which it has flourished into a nationally recognised professional organisation, dedicated to school and public health nursing, striving to constantly optimise the health and well-being of children, young people, and their families.

In light of this news, the Board of Trustees have been working with the senior leadership team (SLT) and Sharon on a transition plan which is nearing conclusion. The Board of Trustees will continue work with SLT on strengthening SAPHNA to meet the challenges faced by all UK charities in the economic circumstances we see today. The Board of Trustees strongly believe SAPHNA has a pivotal role in sustaining and developing public sector nursing as a profession and is strongly committed to growing the charity.

The Board of Trustees have appointed a new Chief Operating Officer to strengthen the leadership of the organisation with immediate effect. Lucy Owen comes with excellent credentials and will work closely with the SLT - [Sallyann Sutton](#) (Professional Officer), [Julie Critcher](#) and [Anne-Marie Gallogly](#) (Deputy Professional Officers) - and trustees. The Board of Trustees are looking at a succession plan for the CEO role and will progress this in the near future.

Sharon has spent most of her nursing career working in the community supporting some of the most vulnerable children and families in society. In recognition of this, she was awarded the Order of the British Empire in the Queens New Years Honours list 2015, specifically for her contribution to driving forward the school nursing workforce and their vital role in child protection and safeguarding.

"It has been an utter honour and pleasure to lead this small but mighty charity, to develop a throng of like-minded voices, raising their roar to champion the health and wellbeing of children and to support the amazing workforce, often against the odds, to be their very best selves to deliver excellence in school nursing services. My personal and professional life has been and will continue to be dedicated to eradicating health inequalities for children, hence, I will continue to cheer loudly from the sides and wish the very best to those who will continue to lead the future growth of SAPHNA." Sharon White OBE.

The Board of Trustees

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