



Professor John Unsworth OBE

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The American Academy of Nursing honours Northumbria Professor with fellowship

A nursing academic from Northumbria University who is leading the way in reforming health equity and policy in the UK has received recognition from the American Academy of Nursing.

[Professor John Unsworth OBE](#), a Professor of Nursing and Deputy Faculty Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education in Northumbria University's Faculty of Health and Life Sciences will become one of only 30 nurses from the UK to have

been honoured by the Academy for his contribution to health equity and health policy.

The American Academy of Nursing works to advance health policy and practice and promote healthcare through social justice, address racism, tackle inequalities and promote innovation and access to services.

Being awarded Fellowship of the Academy is a significant acknowledgement of the substantial, sustained and outstanding impact an individual has made on health and healthcare.

Professor Unsworth's research focuses on the healthcare workforce, shaping UK healthcare policy, increasing access to vital healthcare services by reducing health inequalities and improving workforce development, retention and wellbeing across nursing and social care. He also led the expansion of UK advanced practitioners as chair of the standards groups addressing concerns around universal health coverage for individuals who are homeless, who are refugees or in custody.

He will be formally inducted as a Fellow at a ceremony in Washington DC in November.

Speaking on his work and the recognition from the American Academy of Nursing, Professor Unsworth, who is also Chair of the Queen's Nursing Institute, said: "Despite the United Kingdom having an exceptionally well-developed system of primary health care some patient populations continue to experience problems with accessing healthcare. Amongst these groups are people who are unable to leave their homes because of age, infirmity or illness, individuals with mental health problems or learning disabilities and those people who are detained in prison or who find themselves homeless. Problems with access to services widen health inequalities and reduce opportunities to manage long-term conditions and extend life expectancy.

"Equally our workforce is at a critical point. By 2030 it is expected that we will need 20% of the working age population in the UK to hold a position within health and social care in order to meet the care needs of our population.

"The scale of the challenge is significant, and we need all need to be pulling

in the same direction to address some of the core issues within the sector including retaining those highly skilled professionals we already have and improving universal health coverage.

“At Northumbria University we are already taking steps to improve access to training to allow more people to undertake courses in healthcare, we have an extensive suite of continued professional development to give existing professionals progression routes and we continue to work collaboratively with our partners to develop and implement solutions that will secure the future of the NHS and social care.

“I am delighted to be recognised by the American Academy of Nursing and look forward to being inducted as a Fellow. The Academy is the leading health and nursing policy body influencing policy makers in the United States and globally through its work on evidence synthesis and dissemination. I look forward to contributing to this work alongside the Academy’s existing Fellows.”

Fellows are proposed and supported by existing Fellows within the American Academy of Nursing. Speaking on Professor Unsworth’s upcoming induction, Professor Ann Keen, the UK’s former Under Secretary of State for Health, said: “John is an exemplary nursing leader of significant standing as both nurses and his peers across a range of UK professional bodies hugely admire him as an inspirational leader. He has fought for the retention of primary care specialists, not because of any misguided professional agenda, but because he truly understands the complexity of care and the significant patient safety risks associated with a sub-standard workforce.”

In 2022 Professor Unsworth was awarded an OBE for services to community nursing and community nurse education. He has more than 36 years’ experience as a community practitioner, manager and leader, he has worked extensively to develop international practice and higher education teachers across Thailand, China, Hungary, China, Vietnam, Bahrain, Ukraine and Granada in the West Indies and continues to carry out research relating to patient safety and competence across the workforce.

Professor Dianne Ford, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Health & Life Sciences at Northumbria University said: “John’s selection and induction as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing is testament to his workforce policy work both in the UK and internationally. His contribution to our research activity

around workforce and practice development enables Northumbria to be at the forefront of tackling inequalities and promoting health equity in Newcastle, the North East as well as nationally and internationally.”

Northumbria University is dedicated to reducing health and social inequalities and improving social, economic and health outcomes for the most marginalised in society. Through its new [Centre for Health and Social Equity](#) (CHASE), researchers will be delivering world-leading health and social equity research and creating innovative, evidence-based policies and data-driven solutions to bring impactful change across the region, the UK and globally.

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at www.northumbria.ac.uk

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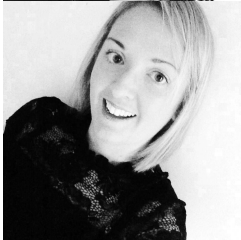
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