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Being a Canadian Network for Nursing Specialties representative to the CNA board: What an Opportunity!

Submitted by: Pamela Hawranik RN PhD, Member CGNA

The Canadian Network of Nursing Specialties (CNNS) was created by CNA to represent nurses who have joined one of 44 nationally recognized specialty nursing organizations. To date, the network represents over 50,000 registered nurses and nursing students. It gives the nurses in the specialty groups a voice at the CNA board of directors and creates a forum in which the nurses within each of the specialty groups and between specialties can share knowledge and collaborate on joint projects. The Canadian Gerontological Nurses Association (CGNA) is one of the specialty groups within the Network.

The Network became an official member class¹ of CNA at the 2014 CNA Annual Meeting. This allows representatives from the Network to participate and vote at CNA board meetings. The Network currently has 10 voting delegates – 8 are elected annually by the specialty groups to vote at the AGM while the other two are elected by the specialty group, biannually to represent the Network at CNA board meetings. Judy Simpson and myself are the two current CNNS representatives.

As a Network representative to the board for all our specialty groups, I:

- chair our regular Network teleconference meetings,
- raise our issues at the board meetings,
- provide you with updates on CNA activities and reports, and
- provide opportunities for specialty group members to participate on committees to formulate reports or position statements for nursing care across Canada.

CGNA has one of the largest memberships in the Network and has one of the highest numbers of nurses who are certified! We as gerontological nurses are keenly aware that we represent a critical specialty that involves complex knowledge and skills and rapidly changing knowledge involving an increasing proportion of the population.

In 2014, CNA focused on *Healthy Aging* for its 'Day on Parliament Hill'. CNA board members met with key Members of Parliament and Senators to lobby for action to

improve healthy aging and seniors care. Three recommendations were proposed, which if acted upon, would make a meaningful difference to seniors. They were:

1. Establish standards across Canada for home health care to ensure all Canadians equitable access to care services that support them in healthy aging.
2. Increase supports to Canadians who provide care for aging relatives by making the existing Family Caregiver Tax Credit refundable.
3. Expand the New Horizons for Seniors Program by incorporating a new objective to support healthy and active aging.

CGNA can play an influential role in the formation of CNA health and nursing policy and practice. You, as a member of the CGNA specialty group, can in turn become active in CGNA committees and activities to make the organization stronger and participate in changing our health care delivery to older adults. Some strategies CGNA, you as a member of this specialty group and as a member of the Network can become involved include:

- Attend the quarterly teleconferences of the network and the special issues teleconferences held almost monthly;
- Nominate a CNNS rep or a voting delegate;
- Raise health and health care issues related to gerontological nursing and geriatrics by working with CNA on position statements or reports;
- Collaborate with other specialty network groups on issues that cross specialty health care issues, e.g. with the Canadian Hospice & Palliative Care Nurses Group, the Canadian Association for Rural and Remote Nursing, the Canadian Association for Rehabilitation Nurses, or the Canadian Council of Cardiovascular Nursing, and many others;
- Work with employers to raise their awareness of the importance of their staff seeking specialty certification, and providing employers with ideas on facilitating and rewarding nurses who have obtained certification
- Encourage gerontological nurses who have retired or who reside in Ontario or Quebec to become CNA members (a new CNA member class). Then encourage those who are not a member of CGNA to become a member

There is a great deal of potential and opportunity for the gerontological nurse to improve the care for the older adult and enhance the quality of their life. I encourage you to become involved. I am looking forward to hearing your issues or what is going well in our practice.

Becoming involved as a CNNS representative has been an exciting endeavor and I look forward to representing you!

I look forward to hearing from you at boardofdirectors@cna-aiic.ca
or phawranik@athabascau.ca

Editor's note: CNSS annual report is available at <http://bit.ly/1Kxwp7W>

Mark your Calendars and Plan to be in Ottawa May 5-6, 2017!

Submitted by: Diane Buchanan and Carla Wells, Conference Co-chairs

Mark Your Calendars! Plans are well underway for the 19th National Conference on Gerontological Nursing to be held in Ottawa, **May 5-6, 2017**. This two day conference will be held at the Ottawa Conference & Event Centre. 2017 is an exciting time for Ottawa as Canada celebrates its 150th Birthday. A year of celebrations are planned for the city, so this would be an excellent year to plan a holiday in Ottawa. May is a beautiful month in Ottawa when the highly acclaimed Tulip Festival usually occurs. Check out Ottawa's planned events at <http://www.ottawa2017.ca/>
In future newsletters, we will provide more detailed information about venue, hotel accommodations, theme, speakers and more!

Congratulations to Newly Certified CNA Gerontological Nurses

In 2015, 412 nurses joined the ranks of those holding CNA certification in gerontological nursing. CGNA congratulates them all and commends them for their commitment to gerontological nursing and older adults. We asked Lucie Vachon, from the CNA certification program to tell our members more about the program. Her article follows.

Gerontological Certified Nurses Lead the Pack of Certified Nurses in Canada

Submitted by: Lucie Vachon RN BSc I inf. aut., BSc, Nurse Advisor, Practice and Policy Division, CNA

With 17 years in the Program, Gerontological nursing continues to keep the podium as the specialty with the highest number of certified nurses in Canada, with 2,522 certifications. With a significant aging population in Canada, it is wonderful to see that Canadian registered nurses with expertise in gerontology are pursuing the CNA Certification, which is a professional step to confirm their advanced knowledge and

leadership in gerontological nursing. And they are among the 18,000-plus RNs in Canada who have earned a CNA certification,

Do you know that every year over 500 Gerontological RNs across Canada choose to step up and write to qualify or maintain their Gerontological National Certification designation *GNC(C)*? These RNs demonstrate to patients, employers and colleagues that they *Care to be the Best* in their specialty.

Specialty Certification is a commitment to the leading edge in national healthcare standards. Certification provides a national scope to the principle of continued competence encouraged by provincial and territorial quality assurance programs. It is a tangible distinction that confirms that an RN has the specialty knowledge and skills that lead to improved excellence in patient care.

Do you know that Certified Nurses. . .

- Choose to seek out certification to demonstrate expertise, knowledge and commitment
- Have gone beyond licensure to validate their specialty knowledge through a rigorous national examination
- Are clinical experts - dedicated to providing quality, evidenced-based clinical care
- Are committed to life-long learning, patient advocacy and professional practice
- Reassess their specialty knowledge throughout their career as part of their commitment to continuing competency
- Maintain their specialty knowledge through specialized continuing education
- Meet and exceed nationally recognized standards of proficiency and professionalism
(certifiednurses.org. March, 2015)

Once GNC(C) certified, your CNA certification credential is valid for a 5-year term. You have the option of renewing the credential through the accumulation of 100 hours of continuous learning (CL) activities earned during your five-year term, OR you can choose to write the exam again. The guidelines for the CL activities are pretty straightforward and it is most important to remember that your CL should relate to your nursing specialty in order to qualify as CL hours for your renewal. Details about the CL guidelines and date of the next application period are listed on the CNA website at getcertified.cna-aiic.ca

Need help to decide and prepare....or to maintain your GNC(C)

If you would like some assistance preparing for certification, CGNA offers many resources and webinars to help you prepare to write your initial exam and when

certified, continuous learning activities to maintain your gerontological nursing certification. For example:

- Access to live educational webinars
- Access to archived webinars
- Access to the electronic version of the 2010 *Gerontological Nursing Standards and Competencies*
- Opportunity to apply for scholarships and research grants
- Reduced conference fees at CGNA Biennial meeting
- Opportunity to participate in CGNA committees
- Networking with gerontological nurses and associates of CGNA

In addition, there are gerontology RN colleagues, already CNA certified, who are available as resources for you. Don't hesitate to consult them, they volunteer their time to provide support and assistance to certification candidates as they really believe in the benefits that certification can bring.

CNA Gerontology Mentors

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CNA members enjoy significant savings on the certification program!

Join the rank of certified nurses and begin to reap the benefits!

Editor's note: See the CNA website for information about registering for the exam
<http://nurseone.ca/en/certification>

Flu Season is Almost Here! Great Resources for Immunization Campaigns Available.

CGNA is a member of [Immunize Canada](#), a coalition of organizations who promote understanding and use of vaccines recommended by the [National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#).

We're happy to let members know that there are some great resources for your immunization campaign or to use in discussion with colleagues and patients, all on the Immunize Canada [website](#). Immunization campaign posters are available to download at no cost. There are links to videos, presentations by experts, fact sheets, a quiz, and a radio game show. They also have a link to [Rick Mercer's 2012 Flu Shot rant](#). It's great.

CGNA Facebook & Twitter

Thank you to all who have 'Liked' us on Facebook! Remember when you are on Facebook that you can post comments and questions, respond to comments and questions, and dialogue!

If you're interested in helping with our Facebook postings or Tweets, contact Lynn McCleary (mlynnmccleary@gmail.com).

Christine Johnson Newsletter Editor

Thank you Diane Buchanan, who served as newsletter editor during her term as Past President. Now that Diane's term is finished, we are transitioning to a new editor. This edition was put together by Lynn McCleary. Subsequent editions will be edited by Christine Johnson. The newsletter is an important communication tool for CGNA. Thank you Christine for taking on this responsibility.

News from Provincial Associations



Alberta – Alberta Gerontological Nurses Association
www.agna.ca

AGNA is engaged in strategic planning, in consultation with members. The Advocacy working group is focussing on supporting members to be more vocal about dementia and related issues. There are a wide range of dementia related resources on the AGNA website. Lynne Moulton (Past President) will be participating in a panel at pre-election Town Hall event in Edmonton in early October. Planning is well underway for an annual education day in April 2016 that will mark the 35th anniversary of AGNA.



British Columbia - Gerontological Nurses Association
of British Columbia
www.gnabc.com

Many of the chapters within GNABC are hosting education events this Fall. GNABC's provincial conference in April in Kelowna was successful. The conference theme was Seniors Advocacy. Liaison with other provincial associations continues, with representation on the ARNBC Specialty Nursing Group. Watch for more information about the provincial conference in April, 2016.



Manitoba – Manitoba Gerontological Nurses'
Association

MGNA was well represented at the May CGNA conference. Seven members received MGNA travel grants to contribute to the cost of attending the meeting. MGNA recognized a veteran MGNA member, a colleague who has given her heart and soul in promoting excellence in care for older adults across the care continuum. Congratulations to Jo-Ann Lapointe-McKenzie, the 2015 MGNA Nursing Distinction Award- Education/Research/Administration.

Membership numbers are increasing. New members are welcome. MGNA is working to engage existing and potential gerontological nurses and reaching out to nurses in rural Manitoba.

The MGNA biennial conference is on Friday October 9 at the Inn at the Forks in Winnipeg. The guest speakers are Dr. Veronique Boscart and Linda Lee.

A general meeting and education session is planned for December 1 at CRNM. The topic is: Volunteers and Paid Companions: Invisible providers of support for older adults in care homes and hospitals. Presented by Dr. Laura Funk, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba.



New Brunswick – New Brunswick Gerontological Nursing Association

A general membership meeting was held on September 11th in Moncton. The guest speaker, Barbara Burnett, Executive Director of the Atlantic Institute on Aging discussed the vision, strategic plan, and upcoming projects of the Institute. The next meeting (date to be determined) will be in Miramichi.



Newfoundland – Newfoundland & Labrador Gerontological Nurses Association www.nlgna.ca

The NLGNA is up and running again and the Executive are excited to begin recruitment efforts. The Executive have been meeting to discuss strategies to increase our membership and plan for an Education Day. A needs assessment will be conducted with members. NLGNA have also been updating our bylaws to more closely align with the bylaws of the CGNA.

A meeting will be held this Fall to discuss the possibility of having an Education Day in Spring 2016. NLGNA members are encouraged to invite their colleagues to get involved with CGNA and NLGNA.



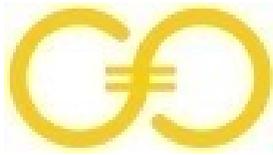
Nova Scotia – Nova Scotia Gerontological Nurses Association www.nsgna.com

The NSGNA 31st Annual AGM & Education Session was a success. It was held May 12, 2015 with the theme of Timely Topics in the Care of the Older Adult. Topics covered included Incontinence Dermatitis, Care of the Older Adult in the Emergency Department & Palliative/End of Life Care in the Long Term Care Setting.

The executive were very pleased to have several NSGNA members attend the wonderful conference in Charlottetown and are now looking forward to Ottawa 2017. NSGNA offers congratulations to PEIGNA for a job well done!!

The executive are working at updating the association bylaws and operations manual in time for the Spring 2016 AGM.

Planning is underway for Education Sessions in 2016.



Ontario – Gerontological Nursing Association Ontario www.gnaontario.org

The GNAO executive is hard at work after a summer break. Check out GNAO's Facebook page and Twitter feed. Facebook is: Gerontological Nursing Association Ontario- GNAO. The Twitter address is @GNAOntario. Their newsletter is available on their website: www.gnaontario.org. The Fall newsletter will be published soon. Membership renewal time for GNAO members is approaching. For membership information see the membership page at www.gnaontario.org.

In April 2015, GNAO Greater Hamilton Area Chapter partnered with local Alzheimer Society for an event entitled "Emergency Room Preparedness". The event was unique in that both healthcare professionals and caregivers attended and could learn from each other.

GNAO Past President Lori Schindel Martin has been selected to co-chair the review of the RNAO Dementia, Delirium and Depression Best Practice Guideline.

GNAO President Julie Rubel was interviewed for an upcoming article examining ways to draw healthcare professionals into the field of geriatrics in light of the anticipated influx of persons with dementia (August 2015).

Upcoming events: Throughout the fall, many of GNAO chapters will be hosting education events that focus on End of Life/ Palliative Care and Physician Assisted Death. Each of the 11 active chapters will host their AGM in either October or November. A detailed list of education offerings can be found at <http://gnaontario.org/gnao2013/education/>

GNAO is eagerly looking forward to hosting the 2017 CGNA Biennial Conference in Ottawa.



Prince Edward Island – Prince Edward Island
Gerontological Nurses Association

On behalf of CGNA members and conference attendees, the CGNA board thanks the PEIGNA for their hard work on a fantastic conference. We were educated, informed, and entertained, thanks to a tremendous group of dedicated volunteers. Congratulations on all of the success!

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