

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello everyone: it's difficult to believe that we are a full month into 2017, and fast approaching the end of another membership year. The winter months include the lead up to AGNA's annual conference and AGM. This year's theme is '**Home Is Where the Heart Is**' and will give members an opportunity to learn more about programs and strategies supporting older adults to live well in their own homes and communities. I hope you will consider joining us April 21, in Red Deer, for our exciting conference and annual general meeting, starting with the President's Welcome in the Lounge at 7:00 pm.

This issue has a focus on connecting with students and engaging their interest in nursing roles with older adults. This has been a topic of consideration for AGNA's Executive and members. I encourage you to read about the work Alberta nursing educators are doing, as well the thought provoking piece by one of AGNA's Honorary members, Cheryl Knight, on concrete action all members can take to shape how students see gerontological nursing.

As we approach the AGM, one executive position, **Provincial Treasurer**, is open for nominations. Please consider if you or a colleague would enjoy the challenge of this role. If you are interesting in knowing more, feel free to contact me or the current treasurer Diane Paley at treasurer@agna.ca. The executive is also developing three new potential executive positions with the intent of testing them out for a year. These roles would be **Membership, Education and a Student** executive member. The role descriptions are in draft, and if you have ideas on how these new roles might grow AGNA initiatives, your feedback is welcome.

Three provincial working groups continue to work on strategies to strengthen AGNA's ability to support its members. These groups, **Considering Membership Issues, Communication, and LPN engagement**, would welcome your thoughts and ideas on how to make AGNA better. If you are interested in providing feedback or participating in our of these groups, please contact me at president@agna.ca

At the 2016 AGM the possibility of hosting the 2019 Canadian Gerontological Nurses Association conference was brought forward and received good support from AGNA members. As directed by membership, executive has discussed this further, and will be submitting a bid to host this event. Alberta successfully hosted three CGNA previous conferences in 1989, 1999 and 2009, and executive hopes continue the pattern of hosting the '*end of the decade conference*' in our great province. If successful, there will be lots of opportunity for membership to get involved.

Registration for the **19th CGNA biennial conference** is now open. This year's conference will be held in Ottawa, May 4th to 6th. This year will be a great year to visit our nation's capital as we celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary. Please have a look below for more information or go to <http://CGNA2017.ca> for full conference details. There are two preconference events as well as two full days of sessions. A quick scan of the program will tell you our AGNA members are well represented among the presenters!

Speaking of CGNA, members pursuing or considering educational opportunities will want to check out the information on two scholarships offered by CGNA. Application deadline is March 31, 2017.

Finally, membership renewal is quickly approaching. Your membership is important to keeping AGNA a strong and vibrant group that supports nurses caring for older adults in Alberta, so please take a moment to make a note to renew before April 1, 2017. Reminders will be sent prior to the April 1st deadline from CGNA. Remember you must renew prior to April 1st in order to benefit from the preferred registration rate for the AGNA conference. **There will not be an auto renewal process in place this year.**

I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming AGM and Education Day this spring.

Regards

Terri Woytkiw

AGNA President, President@agna.ca

CHAPTER NEWS

Edmonton Chapter

Your Edmonton Chapter Executive 2016-17

Role	Name
Chairperson	Kathleen Hunter
Treasurer	Sherry Dahlke
Secretary	Duaa Mohamed
Social-Education	Melissa Crozier, Edythe Andison, Jason Woytas, Jo-Anne Henson

Chapter Executive met October 4 and Nov 14 to plan for the 2016/17 chapter meetings.

- Our first Chapter Members Meeting was Oct 27/16 meeting, and we held another Pizza & Film night, which proved once again to be a popular meeting format. Twenty chapter members attended to watch the documentary "**They Aren't Scary**". This film documented a research project on intergenerational activity that brought young school aged dancers to a long term care setting for an interactive program in dance. We enjoyed a lively discussion following the film.
- Our annual Edmonton Chapters of AGNA and AAG joint dinner meeting took place on January 18, 2017. Traditionally held at the UofA Faculty club, this year our speaker was Dr. Richard Lewanczuk, with a presentation entitled "**Care for Older Adults: The Key to Healthcare Sustainability**".
- March 14, 2017 – we will have a speaker from the Glenrose Continence Clinic. We will also be taking nominations for the 2017-18 Chapter Executive.
- June 14, 2017 - Wind-up BBQ at St. Joes. Presentation TBA (PLEASE NOTE: date changed due to venue availability).

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Hunter

Chapter Chairperson

North Chapter

We are here in Fort McMurray. Three members attended the Gerontology Day and AGM in Red Deer. All were delighted with this awesome day. We did not meet over the Summer/Fall due to fall out of the fire...members busy trying to adapt to the new normal. We joined Jason and the Edmonton Chapter for a joint meeting in November and two new potential members joined for that session. Everyone was inspired to hear Mollie Cole speak on Elder Care. Next meeting set for March 9, 2017. Everyone looking forward to a better 2017!

Mary Stevenson
Chapter Chairperson

WORKING GROUPS

LPN Membership Working Group

Jenny Nanninga

Our group met Nov 24 2017 with four committee members present. We discussed and defined our purpose--to get to know our LPN colleagues and their needs/desires as they relate to gerontological nursing, and our goals—to provide the provincial board with suggestions/ideas how to meet these needs through LPN membership with AGNA. Next meetings will be held in the new year.

Conference Planning Working Group

Jason Woytas, President-Elect

The Conference Planning Working Group are excited to announce AGNA will be holding our annual conference in Red Deer, on Friday, April 21st at the Radisson Hotel. This year's theme is "***Home is Where the Heart Is***". The committee is busy working on confirming speakers. The ***President's Welcome Evening*** (1900 – 2100) will be hosted the **night before the conference**, in the lounge of the Radisson. This informal get together is a come-and-go event and a great chance to enjoy good food and networking as new and old nursing friends arrive from across the province.

The Call for Abstracts is out. Please consider submitting a poster reflecting the great work you do every day.

WE NEED SOME HELP!! We are hoping to gather some door prizes and some potential new sponsors for the conference. If you are aware anyone who is willing to donate a door prize or join as sponsorship, please let me know at president-elect@agna.ca. I would like to thank the many committee members who are helping with the planning and organizing of the conference.

Call for Abstracts for Posters

Alberta Gerontological Nurses Association 2017 Education Day:

Home is Where the Heart Is

The AGNA Scientific Review Committee would like to invite individuals working in the field of gerontology to submit abstracts for poster presentation at the Annual Alberta Gerontological Nurses Association - Education Day, Friday, April 21st, 2017 scheduled for Red Deer, AB.

Posters should address topics of support and care of older adults.

All abstracts will be peer-reviewed and need to be submitted for review no later than **March 15th, 2017**. Email confirmation of completed abstract submissions will be sent upon receipt of it. Email notification of abstract acceptance decision will be sent by March 21st. Please submit the following information to Kathleen Hunter at Kathleen.Hunter@ualberta.ca

Please include the following information in your Abstracts Submission

- Title of Poster
- Name of Presenter/s
- Description of poster (research or quality improvement project) of no more than 200 words
- Contact information including email address.

Note: The primary author of the accepted abstract must register for the education day and man the posters during breaks. Poster presenters assume all costs related to travel, accommodations, and other expenses related to their presentation.

Membership Working Group

Susan Slaughter, Jason Woytas, Jeanne Harker, Mychelle Blackwood, Terri Woytkiw, Mollie Cole

The membership working group has met several times to discuss issues related to recruitment and retention of members. Ways to connect with students through educational institutions, as well as waiving membership fees for students have been explored. An email invitation to CARNA members who expressed an interest in AGNA will be sent prior to the start of new membership year. AGNA's President Elect Jason Woytas has worked with our webmaster to create a YouTube video to promote AGNA. It can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/BGYIx8nyNqY>. We hope to connect with other members to share their comments on what they value about working with older adults and being part of AGNA. If you are interested in this idea, or the work that the membership committee is doing, your participation would be welcome. Please contact Terri at president@agna.ca

Advocacy Committee

Sandi Hirst

Quality healthcare is one of the most important factors in how older adults perceive their quality of life. In most countries, including Canada, alongside the economy, it is a major political issue. The belief that geriatric nurses should act as advocates for their clients underlies the work of the Advocacy Committee. The priorities for the Committee for the current year include:

- Updating and reviewing our content on the AGNA web site,
- Providing resources specific to medically assisted dying and the role of the geriatric nurse via the web site,
- Promoting quality of care for informal care providers of older adults.

Our strategies to achieve these goals include:

- Submission on the dementia strategy action plan to the Executive,
- Review and updating our website with appreciation to our webmaster,
- Submission of two articles for the newsletter, and
- Submitted responses to all CARNA requests for feedback.

I would like to emphasize this is a Committee and we work as a team; my appreciation as Chair to Michelle and Martha.

CGNA NEWS

Scholarships

Ann C. Beckingham Scholarship - Application Period: January 1 - March 31, 2017

The Ann C. Beckingham Scholarship is provided to support outstanding Registered Nurses undertaking

further education in a **graduate degree program** relevant to career development, preferably in the field of gerontological nursing – this includes Nurse Practitioner programs that focus on the care of older adults.

[Download the application form
http://cgna.net/Scholarships.html](http://cgna.net/Scholarships.html)

Memorial Scholarship - Application Period: January 1 - March 31, 2017

Memorial Scholarship is awarded to an outstanding Registered Nurse, Licensed or Registered Practical Nurse, or Registered Psychiatric Nurse who is undertaking further education in a **post-basic undergraduate nursing degree program with a gerontological nursing focus**.

[Download the application form
http://cgna.net/Scholarships.html](http://cgna.net/Scholarships.html)

19th Biennial Conference

<http://CGNA2017.ca>

CGNA2017: Gerontological Nursing

Shaping Healthcare for those Who Shaped Canada May 4-6, 2017 | Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

The Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association (<http://cgna.net>) and the Gerontological Nursing Association of Ontario (<http://gnaontario.org/>) are excited to announce registration is now open for CGNA2017, the 19th Biennial Conference of the CGNA, taking place May 4-6, 2017 in Canada's capital city, Ottawa, Ontario!

The CGNA biennial conference is the only event of its kind that focuses on all facets of education, practice and research in the care of older adults.

With an increasing aging population, it is critical that gerontological nurses remain engaged with the latest developments in research and practice in the field.

The CGNA conference is a key educational and networking event for nurses, students, educators, policy makers, administrators and all others in the field of gerontological nursing.

Visit the CGNA2017 website to register, view the full conference program and learn more about the conference, including the speakers, venue, social events and hotel and travel discounts. We look forward to seeing you in Ottawa!

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH CGNA

Follow us to keep updated on CGNA2017!

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/CanadianGerontologicalNursingAssociation/>

Twitter:

http://www.twitter.com/cgna_ca

<http://twubs.com/CGNA2017>

Website:

<http://CGNA2017.ca>

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT – Growing the next generation of gerontological nurses

One of the key initiatives for AGNA is to attract and engage student nurses in gerontological nursing practice. For years students have been invited to attend Chapter meetings and our annual Gerontological Nursing Day and AGM. Care of older adults has been identified as “the core business” of nursing and health care in general (Thornlow, 2016). It is imperative therefore nursing students become able and enthusiastic carers for this population. Part of this responsibility lies with the faculties and their curriculums’ inclusion of gerontological content. AGNA members from two of Alberta’s university faculties, the University of Alberta and University of Calgary were asked to comment on their institutions’ integration of gerontological content.

At the University of Calgary – It’s Fundamental

A fundamental question: how do we teach seniors’ health at the University of Calgary within the Faculty of Nursing? A fundamental answer: basic content provided to every student through an integrated curriculum. Curriculum integration incorporates the interweaving of *content* (e.g. seniors’ health, pathophysiology) and *elements* (e.g. critical thinking) taught in relation to each other. From a curriculum integration perspective, it makes sense to try to build solid connections between the development of *skills* and the teaching of content, because the skills may be helpful, even foundational, to students trying to understand and use the content taught.

Respectfully submitted

Sandi Hirst

Moving Gerontological Nursing Content Forward at the University of Alberta

At the University of Alberta, we have a number of our faculty that are active AGNA members, including four on the AGNA Edmonton Chapter Executive (Kathleen Hunter Associate Professor, Sherry Dahlke Assistant Professor, Jason Woytas Faculty Lecturer and Jo-Anne Henson Faculty Lecturer). Jason is also our Provincial President Elect. One of our graduate students, Melissa Crozier, is also part of our chapter executive. We are aware that although nurses are caring for older people in most healthcare settings (Canadian Institute of Health Information, 2011), a recent Canadian study identified gaps in practicing

nurses' knowledge about how to care for older people (Fox et al., 2016). As educators, we are actively working to address gaps in knowledge and encourage positive attitudes to aging among our student, graduate and undergraduate.

At the present time, undergraduate program curriculum redesign is underway, and we see this as a golden opportunity to review, identify and address gaps and foster interest in our specialty area. Two of our faculty (Kathleen Hunter and Sherry Dahlke) have been invited to participate in the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) **Gerontological Task Force that will address gerontological nursing content in undergraduate programs from a national perspective. CASN is working with CGNA to hold a pre-conference workshop at the CGNA conference in Ottawa to provide an opportunity for other stakeholders to participate.** Jason Woytas and Jo-Anne Henson teach in the introductory nursing course, an excellent opportunity for committed gerontological nurses to influence new students. Sherry was a supervisor for one of our Honors program students, who completed a literature review on acute care nurses attitudes and knowledge of incontinence.

At the graduate level, our MN program participates in the Certificate in Aging offered on campus. NURS/HECOL 604 Fundamentals of Aging is an interdisciplinary theory/policy course on ageing. During seminars, graduate nursing students have the opportunity to discuss and debate a variety of issues with others from a wide variety of health and academic disciplines. Kathleen has taught this course in the past, and Sherry is currently the instructor. This interdisciplinary course is taken by many of our MN students, including those in the MN NP program. Students completing the certificate as part of their graduate degree focus their thesis or capping exercise on aging.

We are a small, but highly committed group working towards better integration of gerontological nursing knowledge in nursing education and engaging interested colleagues in becoming AGNA members.

References

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2011). *Seniors and the health care system: What is the impact of multiple chronic conditions?* Ottawa, ON: Author. Retrieved from https://secure.cihi.ca/free_products/air-chronic_disease_aib_en.pdf

Fox, M. (2015). A multi-method study of the geriatric learning needs of acute care hospital nurses in Ontario, Canada. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 39(1), 66-76. DOI: 10.1002/nur.21699

Respectfully submitted

Kathleen Hunter, Sherry Dahlke, Jason Woytas, Jo-Anne Henson

So our universities have risen to the challenge and are ensuring their students are exposed to and become comfortable with the care of older adults. But as said, this is only one group with this responsibility. The larger group sharing responsibility may be those of us working with students in their clinical settings. What can we do as practicing nurses to encourage the students we meet to continue their gerontological practice?

In the US, the Hartford Foundation provided funding to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to establish a consortium that would ultimately ensure all nurses were prepared to care well for older

adults. This consortium developed mechanisms to help nursing faculties increase their own gerontological nursing expertise and change undergraduate curriculum. One of the key steps in organizing gerontological nursing training is to “cultivate community and clinical partnerships” (Thornlow, 2006). The recommendation suggests obtaining diverse clinical opportunities across the continuum of care. They suggest thinking broadly, forging community partnerships, choosing partners who share ideologies and provide excellent care, and ensuring such partnerships are mutually beneficial. New students are exposed to well elderly to help dispel myths associated with aging and more mature and experienced students to the complexity of long term care. They recommend students be partnered with advanced practice nurses to show the opportunities available in furthering gerontological practice.

Research by Brown and colleagues (2008) indicate nursing students’ negative attitudes about caring for older adults and working in continuing care settings were not formed on their educational experiences as much as they were based in their negative work or placement learning experiences. As AGNA members can we say we are or belong to organizations that are community partners of choice for the nursing students in our communities? Would a practicum experience in our setting enthrall students with a need to continue in gerontological practice or send them running for the hills?

Here are some things we can do as AGNA members and nurse partners in training students of all levels in health care:

1. Know what the students are intended to learn. Different levels of students are ready for different experiences. Be ready for different levels of knowledge and enthusiasm.
2. Welcome students to the unit or placement making sure they are introduced to the people and the space.
3. Help students first see the person being cared for, and the responsibility we have for person centred care in our practice regardless of setting.
4. Share your care thoughts out loud – speak your thoughts and rationale so students witness your critical thinking process underlying clinical tasks.
5. Encourage students to learn from all members of the health team including unregulated staff.
6. Talk about current strategies to overcome challenges in caring for older adults, including the research taking place here in Alberta.
7. Talk about the community of gerontological practice and opportunities provided by associations like AGNA, CGNA and the Alberta Gerontological Association.

References

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Respectfully submitted

Cheryl Knight



AGNA 2017 www.agna.ca

"Home is Where the Heart Is"

AT THE

RADISSON **in Red Deer**

ON

Friday APRIL 21st

SAVE THE DATE