



Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario
L'Association des infirmières et infirmiers
autorisés de l'Ontario

NURSING RESEARCH INTEREST GROUP

Newsletter

July 2007

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News from the President

Lynn McCleary

Chair, Nursing Research Interest Group

On behalf of the 2007-2008 NRIG executive and members, I'd like to thank outgoing NRIG executive members, Sepali Guruge, Mary Fox, and Irene Koutsoukis for their contributions to NRIG's success over the past year. Special thanks are due to Kathy McGilton, who is moving on to Past Chair. Kathy did a tremendous job keeping NRIG energized, organized, on track, and growing.

This year we're welcoming two new members to the NRIG executive. Angela Cooper-Brathwaite and Maria Tandoc came to our Spring AGM. They not only had a great breakfast and enjoyed Sue Calabrese's excellent description of her evaluation of a new rehab program for people with dementia and hip fractures, they also volunteered to help out on the NRIG executive. Angela is the new member at large for activities and Maria is our new member at large for membership. Over the next couple of months we'll be planning our priority activities for 2007-2008. Please consider becoming involved in planning or participation. We will share some website support with other interest groups, coordinated by RNAO home office, so updating our website will continue to be a priority – hopefully one we can achieve this year. We're planning for a grant writing workshop in the Fall. We had success with piloting technology to broadcast our Spring speaker to two sites. This technology may help us make the grant writing workshop and future activities more accessible to members across the province. Membership

continues to be a priority. We were successful in recruiting over 500 student members last year and hope to do as well again this year. We want to ensure NRIG membership is relevant to our student members. In this edition of our newsletter we're highlighting some students' experiences with research. If you have any suggestions about potential activities, priorities, or actions for NRIG, please contact anybody on the executive. I hope you all enjoy the rest of the summer. Your executive is looking forward to another successful year for NRIG.

Board Member Profiles



Back row: Don, Nancy, Lynn, Kathy
Front row: Elisabeth, Veronique, Angela, Maria

Lynn McCleary is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Nursing at Brock University in St. Catharines. She is conducting research about family carers for persons with Alzheimer's disease, about the prediagnosis experience of dementia, and about implementing the RAO Client Centred Care Best Practice Guideline. She is on the board of directors of the National Initiative for Care of the Elderly.

Kathy McGilton is a research scientist at Toronto Rehabilitation Nursing, and an assistant professor at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto.

Veronique Boscart is a 5th year doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto. Her study focuses on the nurse-patient relationship in chronic care.

Melissa Biscardi is a research assistant at the University of Toronto and a staff nurse at the Create IVF Program. She will be starting her first year of doctoral studies in

the Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto, in September 2007.

Nancy Purdy is a 4th year doctoral candidate at the University of Western Ontario. She is currently in the data collection phase of her research examining the effects of work environments on nursing and patient outcomes.

Don Wildfong is completing his master's degree at McMaster University.

Angela Cooper Braithwaite is a Manager of Public Health Nursing and Nutrition in the Health Department of Durham Region.

Elsabeth Jensen is an Assistant Professor with the School of Nursing at York University. Her areas of research are mental health, interpersonal trauma and nursing history.

Marie Tandoc is a nurse interested in learning to apply research at the bedside. I plan to finish my undergraduate degree from Ryerson by next year and to continue my vision to practice research knowledge at the clinical bedside.

Setareh Nasser is a 4th year BScN student at Ryerson University completing her degree in April 2008.

Feature Article – Student experiences with nursing research - The first steps

Undergraduate Students Learn About Research by Presenting at a National Research Conference

Forth year Brock University students Angela Courneyea, Jeff Biletschi, and Michael Roach agree that participating in a research conference is a good way for students to learn about research and develop professionally. The forth year students worked with their professor, Lynn McCleary, and took major responsibility for preparing and presenting their paper "Reading poetry about the experience of dementia helps nursing students develop empathy" at the Fall 2006 Canadian Association on Gerontology meeting in Quebec City.

The paper described the students' experiences with a reflective learning

activity in their third year mental health course, reading poetry about dementia. Earlier in the year, the students had a book review based on the assignment published in *Perspectives*. The conference presentation gave them a chance to learn about another aspect of scholarship. They worked as a team to prepare the presentation. Angela and Jeff attended the conference with Lynn. Together, the students did most of the talking at the presentation.

Angela and Jeff agreed that this was “an awesome experience” that other students should try to have. Two benefits of the experience stood out for them – professional development and learning about research. They went to the conference nervous about presenting to professionals and people with more education than them. The presentation went very smoothly. They answered questions from the audience and they surprised themselves with their professionalism and skill. Now, both Jeff and Angela are more confident about public speaking and making presentations to their colleagues.

Presenting wasn't the only good part of the participating in the conference. It also demystified the research process. According to Jeff, “Being exposed to all of the poster presentations and the other presentations, seeing the real life author – the person behind the research – brought research to life.” It helped them to understand the research they were reading in school. Angela agreed, she found that the other presenters were friendly and not as intimidating as she thought they might be. Talking to graduate students at their research posters and at a luncheon helped both Angela and Jeff understand what's involved in graduate student research. As Angela explained, she came away thinking “Oh, I can do that.” They both see research and graduate studies as a possibility in their career. For Jeff, doing a thesis as part of graduate studies is now important.

The only downside of the experience is the cost. Fortunately, the Canadian Association

on Gerontology provides scholarships for students presenting at their conference and the students received financial support from the Brock University Department of Nursing and another sponsor. According to Angela the long drive from St. Catharines to Quebec City was worth it. “It was fun and we learned so much.” Both Angela and Jeff highly recommend this experience for future students.

Research Practicum for Undergraduate Nursing Students

April Triano and Jennifer Pieteron, 3rd year nursing students at the University of Western Ontario, participated in a research practicum assisting a PhD student in the early phases of data collection. April and Jennifer were asked to reflect on their experience in terms of its value as a learning experience and their general views on research as part of nursing practice.

As a learning strategy, the students found that the practicum assisted in adding clarity to concepts learned in class and made it easier to consolidate what they had learned in a more tangible and visible manner. The learning was facilitated by participating in a type of ‘post-clinical’ discussion during each week of the practicum. At this time, classroom concepts were applied to the specific study being implemented by the doctoral student e.g. phases and stages of research from formulating a research question to data collection and analysis.

The students gained a greater appreciation for the various components involved in planning and implementing a research study as well as the passion needed to sustain the time and effort that goes into building good evidence. On a practical level, they were introduced to SPSS (syntax, coding and data entry) as well as other processes involved in survey-based research. Not only did they have a better understanding of the role of ethics boards but they commented that they would never turn down an opportunity to share their opinions if approached to participate in a nursing survey. As for the future, they felt the desire

to conduct research may not come for another 10 years but they would be more likely to use and apply evidence-based guidelines now that they see the rigor and science that goes into developing sound evidence.

Members Voices – April 2007 Political Action

On January 25, 2007, the RNAO's 8th Annual Day at Queen's Park was held in Toronto, ON. In excess of 100 members of RNAO were addressed by Minister of Health George Smitherman, Opposition Leader John Tory, PC Health Critic Elizabeth Witmer, NDP leader Howard Hampton, and NDP Health Critic Shelley Martel.

During the question period we were pleased to have had the opportunity to pose a question on behalf of over 600 members NRIG, to Dr. Joshua Tepper, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Human Resources Strategy Division (MOHLTC). The question that was asked pertained to the lack of available resources and mechanisms directed towards the funding of clinician-scientists, with specific emphasis placed on the position of nurse scientist in Ontario. The question was framed in this manner:

"What is your view on nurse researchers/scientists being employees of hospitals? Currently there is no funding available for these positions as resources required for these positions cannot come out of operating dollars. Currently there are approximately only 2 to 4 nurse scientists working in research institutes in Ontario, and their salaries are paid by the affiliated Hospital's Foundation. There is little to no opportunity for additional positions in these institutes as most VPs of research institutes hire 'basic scientists'. If the government and Ministry of Health and LTC is so committed to applying research into practice and/or developing research that is relevant to practitioners and the health consumers of this province, should we not be making it a priority to create alternative funding models

so that nurse scientists can be directly employed at the point of care?"

In his response he indicated that he could relate to the imbalance of current funding mechanisms respecting researchers practicing basics sciences and those engaged in clinical science research.

In a follow-up communication directed to Dr. Tepper dated February 20, 2007, NRIG asked:

In recognition of the enormous contributions made by nurse scientists towards generating new knowledge that focuses on improved patient safety and quality healthcare outcomes, will the Provincial Government, and specifically your Ministry commit to increasing the number of these valuable positions by designating and specifically targeting funding for this purpose?

To date, an official response has not been received.

We are interested in developing collaborative working networks and strategic alliances aimed at strengthening the political representation of issues and positions that are of importance to NRIG members. We commit to raising our voices in support of healthy public policy and the advancement of nursing knowledge and practice.

Respectfully submitted by:

Don Wildfong, RN, BNSc, MSc (student)
Member-at-Large (Political Action), NRIG

NRIG Award Recipients 2007



Susan, Don and Veronique

Recipients of Research Grant (\$1,000):

Susan Jack (Assistant Professor, McMaster University). Study on 'Moral and

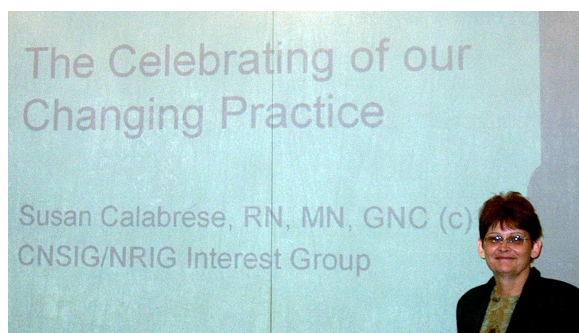
safety issues around anonymity of abused women'.

Recipients of Graduate Scholarships (\$2000):

Don Wildfong (MN, Faculty of Nursing, McMaster University). Thesis: Role of RNAO Best Practice Champions in promoting clinical practice change within healthcare organizations across the province. Supervisor: Dr. J. Skelly
Veronique Boscart (PhD, Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto). Thesis: 'Humanistic nurse-patient relationships in chronic care'. Supervisor: Dr. D Pringle.

NRIG Annual General Meeting 2007

A number of undergrad students were sponsored by NRIG to attend the RNAO and NRIG Annual General Meeting in April. CNSIG and NRIG jointly sponsored a presentation by Sue Calabrese, RN, MN, GNC(c) winner of the Clinical Nurse Specialist of the Year Award. Sue gave a spirited presentation describing a major practice change she led with staff to better meet the needs of a changing patient population within a rehabilitation setting. Sue engaged the audience in a dynamic discussion of strategies to lead and encourage change at the point of care.



Highlights of education events

On May 16th, Maureen Dobbins presented on knowledge translation via videoconferencing connecting participants in Toronto (RNAO Head Office), Sudbury and Ottawa.

Melissa Biscardi and Setareh Nasserri participated in an NRIG display at the Hospital for Sick Children Research Day on June 14 at the Lawrence Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto. Participants included clinicians (staff nurses, CNSs), researchers, post-docs and other students. Interest was shown in the upcoming speaker series on grant writing.

News from Board of Directors- Research Committee

In response to concerns about funding for clinical scientist roles for nurses, the RNAO board prepared an article entitled "Why we need more qualified RNs to fill prestigious nursing research chairs in Ontario" by Jill Scarrow. The article can be found in the March/April issue of RN Journal.

Upcoming Events

The next educational event will focus on developing skills required for preparing grant applications. The session is tentatively planned for September 2007. Details will be forwarded by the end of the summer.

Advanced Notice:

Fifth ICN International NP/APN Network Conference -Leadership in Advanced Nursing Practice: Maximizing Health, Celebrating Collaboration and Promoting Innovation

17-20 September 2008

Toronto, Canada

Call for abstracts opens August 2007

(<http://www.caapn.com>)

Final thoughts....

We want to ensure that you are receiving all of the updates and messages sent by email on behalf of NRIG. Please notify Maria Tandoc at mtandoc@thc.on.ca if you have not received updates since the last membership renewal period. We want to ensure we have your correct email address on file.