



Open Letter to Nurses

Information for nurses working in the Winnipeg health region.

May 2009

In this issue: Internationally Educated Nurses, Continuing Education Fund, Enhanced Orientation for Nurses New to Long Term Care, Winnipeg Critical Care Nursing Education Program, Workplace Wellness, WRHA Nurses: We Can't Live Without You!

Acknowledge yourself and each other! From May 11 to 17 take time to celebrate the accomplishments of nurses. With over 7,000 registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses and licensed practical nurses in the Winnipeg health region - there's a lot to celebrate! The CNA website, cna-nurses.ca, provides National Nursing Week resources and downloadable tools for anyone to use. Download the free poster to put up in your neighbourhood or purchase fun items like washable nursing tattoos! Also, check out nursing week events in your area or attend other locations to celebrate, for example HSC will have Nursing Excellence Awards, Poster Presentations all week in the MS Mall, Thesis Presentations: short clips from nurses' graduate work in the spirit of showcasing and knowledge translation. Also, take time to think about how you are growing your nursing career. Consider your practice and where you'd like to go with it. Mentorship opportunities are available, as are continuing education and funding opportunities to expand your nursing skills.

If you are interested in mentoring opportunities, the CRNM, in collaboration with Red River College, has established the Internationally Educated Nurses (IEN) Workplace Partnership Program which partners Canadian nurses with Internationally Educated Nurses. The program provides an opportunity for all participants to gain valuable cross-cultural communication skills, learn about other cultures, and discuss the domestic and international realities facing nurses.

Partnerships will meet for a minimum of one hour per week for 10 weeks. The program also includes an initial orientation meeting, a program completion event, and ongoing support. IEN Workplace Partnership Program participants will receive an official certificate from Red River College upon completion of the program. Space in the program is limited, so if interested, contact Nadia Mahmood at 632-2016.

If considering continuing your

education this year, there may be funding available to help. The Continuing Education Committee administers funds allocated by the Provincial Nurses Recruitment & Retention Fund to support continuing education of Registered Nurses, Registered Psychiatric Nurses, Graduate Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses who are employed by Winnipeg health region employers and provide direct patient care. This fund is also available to educators and front-line managers who fall under this professional umbrella.

Funding is available for registration or tuition expenses related to conferences, workshops, university and other courses, up to \$500 per calendar year. Travel and accommodation expenses can be claimed for out of town conferences.

Education subsidies are also available to compensate nurses who must take an unpaid education or leave of absence to attend workshops or conferences. This subsidy is not available for long-

term courses, such as university or courses spread over several weeks. Current education subsidy rates are: RN/RPN \$175.00 for an 8 hour shift and \$250.00 for a 12 hour shift; LPN \$150.00 for an 8 hour shift and \$200.00 for a 12 hour shift. Nurses may apply for three days per calendar year.

Application forms can be downloaded at www.wrha.mb.ca (follow the links under WRHA Staff/Info for WRHA Staff/Nursing/Continuing Education Fund), or phone 334-3433 or e-mail coned@matc.ca.

Also for educational funding, the Nurses' Alumni Association of the Winnipeg General Hospital and Health Sciences Centre supports the ongoing education of active Alumni members through two funds - The Jane A. Malcolm Bursary Fund and the Viola Leadlay Continuing Education Fund. For deadlines and application information, visit hsc.mb.ca/nursing; click on "Funding Opportunities."

MAY 11-17, 2009

NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

Many educational opportunities are available in the region. One possibility open to you is to learn while you earn with the Winnipeg Critical Care Nursing Education Program - a chance to study technologically advanced methods of treating critically ill patients in medical and surgical intensive care units. This 14-week experience is full of concepts, theories and practices in lab settings; as well as, applied in-depth assessment and critical thinking skills. A new session is starting soon, to enrol contact 926-7084 or criticalcare@wrha.mb.ca.

Also, Manitoba is one of nine participating provinces in the national project *Research to Action: Applied Workplace Solutions for Nurses*, funded by Health Canada and overseen by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, to address nursing recruitment and retention issues. The Manitoba project, *Enhanced Orientation for Nurses New to Long Term Care*, is a collaborative project between Winnipeg health region's Personal Care Home Program, Manitoba Health and Healthy Living and the Manitoba Nurses Union.

This is another great opportunity for nurses, as over the next 18 months enhanced orientation for recently hired nurses will take place at three PCHs: Misericordia Health Centre; Holy Family Nursing Home; and Centre Taché Centre. Fifteen nurses new to long term care will be matched with fifteen experienced nurse mentors to provide support and guidance, as well, there will be a series of workshops based on clinically relevant topics on the care of individuals in long term care.

Recruitment of nurses into the project has started. Information on recruitment is available from the WRHA PCH Program at 831-2963.

While considering these many opportunities to further enhance your nursing practice, also consider the opportunity to improve upon your workplace wellness. Right now, we can all participate in the Workplace Wellness Checkup, online at <http://home.wrha.mb.ca/wwc>.

Participation in this important survey provides valuable information on how to improve the quality of our workplaces and increases the opportunity for nurses to have healthier, happier jobs.

Let's face it - we spend most of our time at work, so we should do what we can to recognize each other's daily contributions and offer feedback to help make our workplace a healthy place to be. (Also, by participating in the Workplace Wellness Checkup, you will be entered for a chance to win a day off work - with pay!)

To all nurses in the region, sincerely from me and on behalf of WRHA senior management, thank you for the care you provide - we can't live without you!

Jan Currie



2009 National conferences in Winnipeg:

Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Nurses, June 3-5, www.carn.ca

Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (Canada), October 15-17, www.awhonncanada.org

Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association - Nurses Interest Group, October 18-21, <http://conference.chpca.net>

Workplace Integration of New Nurses - Nursing the Future, December 9-11, <http://winn-ntf.com>



Access to the current issue and past issues of Open Letter to Nurses is available on INSITE. Submissions and comments are welcome.

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