



LORI LAMONT  
Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer

# Open Letter

## TO NURSES

IN THE WINNIPEG HEALTH REGION

*Scope of practice is often defined solely by a range of activities that a nurse is legally authorized to provide. Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses all have their own scope of practice defined in Provincial legislation. Over time the boundaries have been getting wider and more flexible. We've come to a point where we need to ensure all nurses can practice to their fullest potential and in the best interest of safe quality care.*

I hope you had an enjoyable summer. It's amazing how quickly the warm weather months have zipped by. But then again this first year for me as the Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer of the Winnipeg Health Region has also come and gone faster than I could ever have imagined. Heading into a second year in this role, I'm very excited by the opportunities I see for nurses.

A current and hot topic many nurses are talking about is scope of practice. It's being examined by Health Regions and Nursing Colleges across the country. I want to share with you some of the work being done on scope of practice here in the Winnipeg Health Region and why it's such an important issue for our profession and to the people we serve.

When we look at scope of practice in the Winnipeg Health Region it's not just about tasks that nurses are able to perform. It's about matching the basic educational preparation, competence and experience of the nurse with the needs of the patient.

It sounds simple enough, but how do we do that?

A 12 member working group from the Nursing Leadership Council has been examining scope of practice for the past two years. The team has studied the work being done in other provinces like Ontario and Alberta and also by the Colleges of Licensed

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Maria Milton

Nikol Chorney  
Angie Van Solkema

Nancy Smith  
Laurie Crossman

Practical Nurses of Manitoba, Registered Nurses of Manitoba and Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba.

Using that research, the working group has gained a better understanding of who we are, how we work together and how we maximize our potential as three groups of nurses. Factors like the nature and complexity of a person's condition, the education and experience of the nurse and the types of consultation resources available in the health care environment all need to be considered in order to provide the best possible care.

Some key questions we should be asking include:

- Am I the right nursing provider to give care to this person?
- Can I safely do what I'm being asked to do?
- Should I be practicing differently?
- Am I nursing to my fullest potential?

The reality is that many nurses in the Winnipeg Health Region are not working to their full scope of practice. Consider the results of a recent survey by the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (Spring 2009). One in every four respondents (25.9%) said they were not working to their full scope of practice. And nearly everyone (96.3%) agreed that patients would be the ultimate beneficiary if all health care providers practiced to their full scope of practice.

For nurses this could lead to more job satisfaction. People are ultimately happier when they are fully engaged in their job, they're excited about the work they're doing and it builds confidence. Working within scope of practice can also reduce feelings of being overwhelmed.

### WHY NOW?

Some people might be wondering why there is so much emphasis NOW on scope of practice. These are discussions that are going on across the country.

As we plan for the future we understand more about health human resources. There's evidence that decisions made in the past based purely on fiscal or philosophical factors have not had the best outcomes and in some cases resulted in poor outcomes.

We're developing a more complete and thoughtful way of looking at staffing so that it takes into account the person, the nurse and the environment.

It's about creating the right balance so that it includes all three groups of nurses working to their full scope of practice. We can create a strong practice environment for nurses that will ensure we are ready to fully participate in the interprofessional practice teams of the future.



Kaydi Ann Borgersen

## LOOKING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR PRACTICE?

If you haven't already read it, check out  
CLPNM, CRNM, CRPNM's report called  
Understanding Scope of Practice

You'll also find the survey results on  
scope of practice at  
[www.crnmb.ca](http://www.crnmb.ca)

*contribute*

# In THE Spotlight

CELEBRATING ONE  
OF YOUR NURSING  
PEERS EACH ISSUE!



*"I've been in both shoes – needing someone to help care for my mom while she was living in our home. Now I'm in clients' homes asking what more I can do to help them."*

*Robyn Drayson-Bancroft, LPN*

**ROBYN DRAYSON-BANCROFT, LPN, Visiting Nurse**

**How have you seen the 'scope of practice' change during your nursing career?** It's amazing how much more I'm doing as an LPN today than 25 years ago when I graduated. I started working in a hospital, now I'm in the community looking after a full case load of 20 clients in their homes. I'm giving intramuscular injections and taking care of complicated wounds. I've learned so much. LPNs weren't even changing catheters when I first began practicing.

#### **Describe what it's like being a Visiting Nurse**

It's a unique perspective when you're helping a client in their own environment. Sometimes you're the only person that client will talk to about their fears about dying, or you have the client who welcomes you with open arms because they haven't seen anyone in eight hours. You're there for people who have such diverse needs. You really have to know about many aspects of nursing. Sometimes you can get a client with things you've never seen before. It's challenging and rewarding.

#### **What gets you out of bed in the morning?**

I love my job and I feel very fortunate to have this position and to work with such a great group of colleagues. Even though you're alone visiting a client you still know there's always someone who will answer your questions, offer advice or tell you, you did a great job.

#### **What has had a profound influence on your nursing practice?**

Taking care of my mother while raising three kids and working evenings. It was hard and I should have accepted more help. Going through that really opened my eyes to home care and the struggles families face trying to support their loved one who is sick or dying.

## EVENTS

### **CNA CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Certification is offered in 19 specialties and areas of nursing practice. Application deadline is October 15th (Nov. 26th for certification renewal)

<http://getcertified.cna.aicc.ca>

### **CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PEDIATRIC HEALTH CENTRES (CAHPC)**

Annual Conference in Winnipeg  
October 17 – 20

<http://conference.caphc.org>

### **4TH ANNUAL BLOOD DAY**

Wednesday November 3rd  
Frederick Gaspard Theatre 727  
McDermot Ave  
[bloodconservation.mb.ca](http://bloodconservation.mb.ca) or call 787-1277

### **NATIONAL PAIN AWARENESS WEEK**

November 7 – 13  
[canadianpaincoalition.ca](http://canadianpaincoalition.ca)

### **WOUND CARE EDUCATION SESSIONS**

Available September 2010 – January 2011  
[wrha.mb.ca/osd/clinical\\_woundcare.html](http://wrha.mb.ca/osd/clinical_woundcare.html)