



Registered Nurses Network of BC
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Update on Network Progress

The Pace of Progress

A major challenge we face is finding the right balance between moving quickly and decisively to mobilize the nurses of BC toward some form of reinstatement of our Association function, and the need to ensure that everyone is as informed and involved as possible about the issues. Any of you who have been involved in change processes know that there are rarely "right answers," but we are committed to doing our utmost to keeping you informed and inviting your input. These updates are one way of communicating with our growing number of members, and yet still devoting our (entirely volunteer) time to wrestling with finding the best way forward to BC nurses in 2010. While it is challenging to keep up with the pace of change in our provincial professional college and our national association, we are confident that all of these pieces will align and we can come to a solution that genuinely serves all nurses in BC.

We greatly appreciate both the words of encouragement from so many of you and your willingness to trust that we have the collective interests at heart in pressing this forward. Toward this end, we believe we need to act as decisively and strongly as necessary within these rapidly changing times, and yet also be as transparent as possible with the process and the available options. Because of the limitations imposed by the regulatory changes, registered nurses are missing opportunities to offer a professional perspective on health and public policy issues that are of concern to us, and would benefit from the wisdom of nurses. We are impatient to rectify the situation as quickly as we can. This is our moment for action, our opportunity to express our professional voice on matters of public policy.

Until such time as we have the infrastructure in place and the people appropriately positioned to be formally accountable to you - the nurses of BC - we will do our best to steward action and dialogue toward a permanent professional association mechanism for nursing in BC. Nursing has a strong national voice in the CNA but, as individual nurses, we have no direct relationship to that voice. BC has some tables at which nursing voices can be effectively heard (such as matters of regulation or workplace conditions) but no venue for all nurses to speak out on matters of public concern. Any new organization must be configured to respectfully align with the existing bodies - especially the CRNBC, CNA and BCNU - and must be structured in a manner that maximizes both nursing engagement and public policy credibility. These are the matters we intend to bring to you at our May general meeting - with our thoughts and recommendations on the next steps forward. Until then, we'll work intensively to bring all the pieces of the puzzle into some alignment.

Differentiating the Roles of Regulatory Bodies and Associations

Because we are in changing times when it is increasingly important that the nature of various organizations be clearly articulated and differentiated, we have created a new document on this topic. You'll find it in our Key Information Links on the RN Network Website. We believe it will be of vital importance that these distinctions be understood as we venture into the new world of complementary organizations.

The Implications of RN Network Membership

In our initial version of the RN Network Terms of Reference, we were not as explicit as we might have been about what membership implied. We aren't a fee-based organization, and we don't even provide a membership card. Rather, we are an organization designed to create another organization, within which a different membership arrangement will have to be carefully worked out. So for now, signing on as a member simply means that you have stepped up to joined a force for change and signaled your commitment to a future for BC nursing that includes a professional voice - however that is best configured.

This is how we've stated it on our web page:

The RN Network is a transitional organization of individuals and groups aiming toward addressing a matter of concern to all nurses in BC. Those who have joined the coalition of interested nurses have signaled their desire to work together to explore the creation of a permanent forum for the expression of a BC nursing perspective on matters of public policy, whether they be local, national, or global. Members will receive regular updates on Interim Steering Committee progress, and will be notified of general meetings. In its transitional form, the RN Network is a voluntary, no-fees organization seeking to create a more formalized mandate as the optimal organizational configuration emerges from the planning and consultation process. We look forward to working with all nurses to find the solution that will best serve our unique provincial context.

So despite our transitory nature, we do believe we are something well worth joining. We are encouraging our current members to talk this idea up with your colleagues, point them in the direction of the website (RN Network of BC on your search engine) and consider joining us too. You can really help by assisting us to grow our numbers of nurses (and former nurses) dedicated to this cause!

Once again, thanks for your enthusiasm and your passion for the value of a nursing perspective on matters of public and health policy. We are inspired by your commitment to this process, and we are confident that we will succeed together.

See you on May 19th!

From all of us
on the RN Network Steering Committee:

Heather Mass	Sally Thorne
Jo Wearing	Lynette Best
Maureen Shaw	Sharon Toohey
Paddy Rodney	

Don't forget our general meeting
May 19 6-8 PM
at the Paezhold Auditorium, VGH

(with live webstream for those unable to attend in person).

Look for an insert in the March edition of
Canadian Nurse for further details!