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## **Network Update #13 - April 14, 2011**

### **The Challenge of Patience**

Members will have noted the length of time since our last update, and we know that many of you have been wondering why you have not been hearing from us. We have been active although we recognize that the last couple of months of silence in relation to the RN Network and ARNBC updates may have been concerning for some of you. Hence this update as well as the imminent launch of the ARNBC website (more on the website below).

The ARNBC Interim Board has continued working on your behalf over the last few months. ARNBC, CRNBC and CNA have had positive and constructive meetings to discuss the feasibility of assigning CRNBC's jurisdictional membership in CNA to ensure the voice of BC nurses is heard nationally as well as provincially on health, nursing and public policy. The issues are complex, requiring consultation with other parties, and it will take time to bring these discussions to a conclusion.

As you will appreciate, the activity necessary to create a viable future mandate, structure and resource base for a nursing association in BC been challenging and our major focus. At the same time, we have been establishing the infrastructure to allow ARNBC to move forward toward that goal. The Board is committed to ensuring that the eventual determination of the future of ARNBC is made on the basis of balanced, inclusive, and democratic discussions and decision-making processes. This process will be led by an elected Board after our first official Annual General Meeting (which we plan to hold in the fall of 2011). So we ask for your patience for just a while longer, and are so grateful for the confidence that you have placed in us through your wonderfully encouraging messages and expressions of good will.

### **Ensuring a Nursing Voice in the Upcoming Federal Election May 2**

With a federal election right around the corner, we want to encourage BC nurses to keep nursing on the minds of candidates during this critical time when positions are developed and public opinion is informed. We encourage all members to check out the excellent tools and resources on the Elections 2011 section of the CNA website (just Google "CNA Elections 2011" or go to <http://23072.vws.magma.ca/election/index.html>). Here you'll find great information about the central federal policy issues of concern to nurses, as well as useful tips on how to send letters to your candidates, upload postings to online news sources such as CBC, participate in town halls and all-candidates meetings, and ensure that those who are elected understand the importance of nursing.

You might also find it informative to see the press release on the website of the College & Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta describing the participation of CNA's Executive Director Rachel Bard in a public panel in Edmonton, cosponsored by the Canadian Medical

Association and *Macleans* magazine as part of their *Healthcare Transformation in Canada* campaign (<http://www.nurses.ab.ca/Carna/index.aspx?WebStructureID=3342>).

These are precisely the kinds of high publicity conversations that must be held to ensure that the professional perspective of nurses on key issues is well represented to both the public and to the policy makers.

### **Political Changes at the Provincial Level**

The Government of BC has had a recent leadership change and cabinet shuffle, with the potential for a provincial election looming in the future as well. ARNBC has reached out to both the new Premier and the new Minister of Health to communicate the role we expect to play in the evolving provincial conversation, and to bring ARNBC to their attention as a way to link to nursing expertise around the province. We know that many of you have local connections with your own MLAs and hope that, when the time comes, we can mount a strategic approach to ensuring that nursing voices are heard and respected by elected officials around the province. We are excited with the prospect of so many future opportunities to inform public policy. Although we are not yet positioned to be able to do all that we would hope to, there are some issues that are of such urgency and importance that they cannot wait until we have completed our structural formation process (for example, see an editorial about involvement with the Insite Supreme Court case in the April edition of *Canadian Nurse*).

### **ARNBC Website:**

We have developed a website platform as part of a larger communication plan, and hope to officially “launch” that website during Nurses Week in May. In the meantime, we are now ready to “soft launch” it with our RN Network members. *What we are asking of you is to go in, check out the website, and offer your comments, suggestions and advice.* Although what you will see is just the frame for what will develop into a much more informative and interactive website to come, your input now will provide important guidance as we expand our Network to bring the word to all BC nurses. So check out [www.arnbc.ca](http://www.arnbc.ca) and send your thoughts and ideas to [admin@arnbc.ca](mailto:admin@arnbc.ca)

### **Communicating with the ARNBC Board**

As of this week you can also communicate with the ARNBC Board directly, rather than through the RN Network group email centre. Your comments and advice are important as we move forward. All emails to [board@arnbc.ca](mailto:board@arnbc.ca) will be forwarded to the most appropriate Board member and we will do our best to respond in a timely manner.

Once again, thanks for your patience as we work to establish an inclusive democratic nursing professional association in BC. The ongoing support we have received from nurses throughout BC has kept us inspired!

*Rob Calnan, Susan Duncan (ARNBC Interim Board Co-Chairs);  
Lynette Best, Julie Fraser, Suzanne Johnston, Leanna Loy, Paddy Rodney, Maureen Shaw,  
Sally Thorne, Jo Wearing (Interim Board Members)*