

Newsletter

Summer Edition / June 2009

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Hi everyone,

I hope you are gearing up for what ever the next few months bring. Maybe you're thinking about what position you will take on the executive for the coming year. With the change in the annual year running from June 1 to May 30, chapters will be having their nominations and election of officers for 2009 - 2010. That is pretty incredible, as 2010 is of course, the year of the Olympics in BC, too. It seems like only yesterday, we were bidding to have the games here and now it is just around the corner. I will be settling into my second and final year as president. Already, I have had the pleasure of attending three different chapter meetings and I plan on getting to meet everyone across BC before June 1, 2010. Fortunately, I like to drive and used to live up north so it isn't out the realm of possibility that I will get there before the snow falls this year. Wow, how the time does fly - even faster the older I get.

As well as chapter meetings, Rea Braithwaite, the past provincial treasurer and I attended two days of the BCNU Conference at the Hyatt Hotel in Vancouver in February to promote Gerontological Nursing. It was rewarding to meet so many nurses from all over the province who were interested in promoting quality healthcare for the Older Adult. Some are already involved, some signed up to join chapters and some were interested in starting chapters where they live – the Kootenays and the Sunshine Coast to mention two places. Dawson Creek used to have a chapter, but found challenges with such

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

long distances to travel and winter weather for so many months.

Have you checked out TeleHealth Education at your work place? Ask about where you can access this. Some great Gerontological topics have been organized by Marcia Carr, Education Chair. This is a good way for people up north to stay informed.



I hope you have your calendars marked to attend the AGM and Conference in Nanaimo September 17th and 18th, 2009. It looks like it will be fun and informative. The Island chapters always do a great job of hosting the conference.

In the near future, the newsletter which is now on the webpage, www.gnabc.com for everyone to read will become available on the "Members Only" section on the website. In other words, this will be another benefit, exclusive to GNABC members. Education via the newsletter is definitely a perk. What an easy way to maintain your CRNBC competency.

Stay tuned to the website for a whole new look including our new slogan:

“Advocating for Competent and Responsible Collaborative Healthcare For the Older Adult”

Thanks to all of you for doing your part to make this happen throughout BC.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Hutchinson

GNABC EXECUTIVE 2008-09

PAST PRESIDENT – Catherine Marsden
email: marsden_catherine@hotmail.com

PRESIDENT – Heather Hutchinson
email: hhutchinson@telus.net

PRESIDENT-ELECT – ROGERS-NEARY, DARLENE
email: drogers-neary@shaw.ca

TREASURER – Liz Ilczaszyn
email: liz45@shaw.ca

SECRETARY – Heather Frame
email: hez@telus.net

LOCAL GROUP PRESIDENTS

CENTRAL OKANAGAN – Sheila Farrell
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FRASER VALLEY – Louise Brown
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NORTH & CENTRAL VANCOUVER ISLAND –
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email: bpalmer@sipeq.ca

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VANCOUVER ISLAND

EDUCATION – MARCIA CARR
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Contributions Welcome

This quarterly newsletter is produced by the Gerontological Nurses Association of B.C., a society affiliated with the Canadian Gerontological Nurses Association. It is designed to provide information and support for Gerontological nurses.

Everyone is welcome to contribute. We would like your articles, viewpoints, letters, book reviews, news about workshops, jokes, anecdotes, pictures or whatever you wish to share with your gerontological nursing peers.

The newsletter is produced by our members, and is posted on our website in March, June, September and December. The cost of membership is for RNs \$65/year and includes GNABC membership, CGNA membership, and the CGNA newsletter. RPNs and LPNs membership is \$45/year for full GNABC membership.

Our new Mailing Address (from Dec. 1, 2008) is:
GNABC, c/o Brent Oxenbury, Oxy's PC Services, 2366 Bonny Road, Quesnel, B.C. V2J 7G6

Please send written contributions to the Newsletter Editor's email address in Word format, or fax/phone 604-879-4199. The GNABC reserves the right to edit information submitted for publication.

Sheila Clark
Email: sheilac@telus.net

2009 Newsletter Deadlines
Feb. 13 July 31
May 1 Nov. 13

Advertising rates are: 1/4 page, \$75; 1/2 page, \$100; full page, \$150. (Please send ad enquiries to the editor.)

Editor's Note

Since the closure of the former shared GNABC and CGNA business office, mail has continue to find its way to Gwen's address in South Granville. The GNABC has fortunately found a solid address with Brent Oxenbury at Oxy's PC services. The CGNA has a new interim email address of cgna@nurs.ualberta.ca, and mailing address c/o Dr Belinda Parke, CGNA President, Faculty of nursing, 3rd Floor Clinical Sciences Building, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2G3.

It is also time for renewal of memberships, as our year end has moved from August 31st to May 31st. Please visit our website at www.gnabc.com to download a membership application form, or fill one out at your local chapter meeting.

I recently noticed in the spring issue of *the Canadian Gerontological Nurse* (CGNA Newsletter) that progress about a previous AGM motion to open up membership to all categories of nurses will be announced at the AGM in Banff. This excellent publication can be accessed at www.cgna.net. I especially like their articles and book reviews, and in their spring edition, a clever letter by an elder addressing bank bureaucracy appears on page 28. It is worth checking out.

Have a happy summer.

Sheila Clark



Ways to Help Prevent Falls in Older Adults

Falls are an important and preventable problem in older adults. Every community member can help in the process of preventing falls to prevent potential injury, suffering and to enhance quality of life. The following article will address facts, concerns, issues, prevention and importance of helping everyone stay on their feet!

It is amazing to see the evidence on falls, and the severity of injuries sustained after a fall. For instance, falls cause more than 90% of hip fractures amongst persons 65 years and older and 20% actually die within one year of their fractures. Often after a fall, family members are no longer able to care for their loved one, and 40% of the time end up placing them in a care facility. Falls incidence in care facilities are three times higher than in the community settings (Canadian Falls Prevention Curriculum Resource manual, 2007).

Definition: According to the Canadian Falls Prevention Curriculum (CFPC, 2007) a consistent definition of a fall is “**unintentionally coming to rest on the ground, floor or other lower level with or without injury.**” Often it is difficult to tell exactly how a fall occurred. There is speculation regarding incidence of falls, but regardless of this, falls are costly and can contribute to severe injuries, depending on impact of the fall. More than 7,000 Canadians aged 65 and older died as a direct result of a fall in the years of 1997 to 2002 (CFPC, 2007). Falls often occur due to loss of balance and poor recovery from this.

Estimated hospital costs for fall-related injuries are as follows:		
INJURY:	INDIVIDUAL COST:	AVERAGE ANNUAL:
Hip Fracture	\$18,508	\$75,253,165
Upper Limb Injury	\$11,571	\$14,107,527
Head Injuries	\$14,425	\$14,821,189
Abd, Back & Pelvic Injuries	\$14,135	\$13,883,954



Contributing Risk Factors to Falls

Biological & Behavioral Factors:

Impaired balance, mobility/walking, weak muscles, chronic conditions such as Parkinson’s disease, arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, cognitive impairment, incontinence, foot disorders, vision problems and acute illness can all contribute to falls. Personal and behavioral factors include fear of falling, multiple medications (including pain, antidepressant, anti-anxiety and sleeping pills), lack of sleep and exercise, poor nutrition and hydration, inappropriate use of walking aids, and inappropriate footwear and clothing.

Social & Economic Factors: Persons with lower incomes were reported to be less likely to afford proper footwear, assistive devices, nutritious diet, prescribed medications. They have more problems with ill health and diseases and have difficulties with reading and writing skills. They may also lack family and social supports, lack transportation, have higher rates of depression. These can all contribute to higher falls rate.

Environmental Hazards: Electrical and telephone cords, oxygen tubing, throw rugs, loose carpets, cluttered floors, **poor lighting** on stairs and other areas in the house, slippery floors, lack of grab bars in the shower stall or toilet area, lack of railings on stairs (need railings both sides of the stairs indoors and outdoors), and pets underfoot can all contribute to tripping.

Preventing Falls

Behavioral: This includes common goals and strategies. The main thing is choosing the right timing to initiate change with a family member, client/patient, or even yourself. Realizing the positive benefits of improved strength, confidence, or independence may help a person overcome resistance to a behavior change, such as using a cane or walker recommended by a physiotherapist.

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GNABC

Chapter Reports

continue on the last Tuesday of every month. Time:

1845Hrs.

Place: New Vista Care Centre
7550 Rosewood
Burnaby BC

Membership is \$65.00

Drop in fee \$10.00

Rea Braithwaite
Newsletter Correspondent

CENTRAL/NORTH ISLAND

The Central/North Island chapter has been very active this year with organization and planning of the provincial conference in September. The agenda, brochure and registration information will be distributed ASAP with registration details provided by the Victoria chapter. The venue will be at the Coast Bastion Hotel, as it provides a great area for the conference, wonderful food and is close to the ferry and sea planes. We have a variety of innovative speakers with several topics including “Dizziness in the Older Adult”, “Botox for Spasticity”, “Fall prevention and Research”, “Drugectomy of the Older Adult”, to name a few.

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VANCOUVER

Our last meeting before the summer is on May 25th at Vancouver Community College Broadway campus 1900 – 2100 hrs on the first floor of the new building B, room 1227. The entrance is off of 7th Avenue and Glen Street, and there is ample parking nearby. Shirley Clarke is speaking on Geriatric Assessment. Shirley has taught this subject for many years and has great skill and a great sense of humour. It would be wonderful to get large numbers out so we can ask what day of the week is the best to meet for the fall term. If you are unable to attend because it is a Monday, please let us know what days and are better by email to sheilac@telus.net.

Cheryl Irwin, Education Coordinator
Sheila Clark, Secretary

FRASER VALLEY

The FV chapter did not meet in May as some members were attending the Banff CGNA conference. Our last meeting before the summer break will be a dinner meeting on the 11th of June with Dr. McInnis talking about “The Ethics of tube feeding”. Members can email me louise.brown@fraserhealth.ca for venue details.

Louise Brown, President

SIMON FRASER

We had a very successful year with the average attendance at our meetings being 25 including members and drop-ins. We held our AGM on Tuesday April 28th. The new slate of executive officers is as follows:

PRESIDENT

Li MacTaggart

PRESIDENT ELECT SECRETARY

Barb Gardiner

EDUCATION CO ORDINATOR

Evelyn Coxan

TREASURER

Rea Braithwaite

MEMBERS AT LARGE

REFRESHMENTS

Aruna Dholakia

REGISTRATION

Patricia Roy

NEWS LETTER

Rea Braithwaite

Our membership consists of RNs, RPNs, LPNs, and RCAs. They come from all sectors of the health field.

Our Conference last September was a big success with a very good profit.

We had a post conference planning

committee get together at the Executive Plaza Hotel to thank everyone for their hard work.

Our meetings will



Members of the Simon Fraser Chapter

Member Profile: Lillian Taggart

Lillian MacTaggart, known as “Li” (pronounced “Lee”), begins her term as President of the GNABC Simon Fraser Health Chapter in June. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, and a Master in Health Services Administration degree. She is a certified member of the Canadian College of Health Service Executives and the Canadian Gerontological Nurses’ Association. Li brings an extensive background in long term care, acute care, and health care management. Previous



positions have included Senior Administrator, Long Term Care and Residential Services, Director of Care, Manager of Intensive Care Unit, and Director/Manager of Health Services. Currently she works as a Transition Services Coordinator (Acute to Community) for Vancouver Coastal Health and manages her own foot care clinic.

GNABC – Education Update

Telehealth has been quite a successful medium for delivering nursing education. So far, *Medications in the Elderly* and *Hearing Loss* have been presented. The evaluations received have been very positive. The power point presentations should be up on our website soon if not already.

Please also visit www.acggn.ca which is the Acute Care Geriatric Nurse Network website is continually having more information posted on it.

Please e-mail me at marcia.carr@fraserhealth.ca on any topics that you would like education on.

Marcia Carr – Education Coordinator for GNABC

Chapter Reports

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Our membership has continued to expand with an increase of BSN students and LPNs. We usually have an education session on the third Monday of each month at Traveler’s Lodge, but this will be changed to a dinner meeting on May 11th due to the Victoria Day holiday. As our numbers grow, we will be finding a new venue. Some of the topics this year have been:

- cholinesterase inhibitors
- patient centered care
- Botox for spasticity
- signs and treatment of osteoporosis
- pain in the older adult

There was also a great response to Vancouver Island University’s “handle with care” conference facilitated by mental health and addictions and a few students from Vancouver Island University. We are meeting September 14th for a “work party” prior to the September Conference and the more hands make less work. Volunteers are welcome!

Catrin Brodie, President

Internet Websites

Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario (RNAO)

This is the website of the professional association of Registered Nurses in Ontario. If you scroll along the top of the page and click on “Best Practice Guidelines” in the little blue box, you will be taken to the next screen. Click on “Clinical Practice Guidelines” on the left hand side of the screen and you will be taken to the next page. Click on “Guidelines and Fact Sheets,” found close to the top of the page and you’re there. Some guidelines found here cover such topics as cognitive impairment, falls prevention, constipation, etc. This site is definitely worth a look.

www.mao.org

Canadian Association of Wound Care

For those of you interested in wound care, this site has a wealth of information. If you don’t know the difference between an arterial or venous wound, and what current best practices are, then you’ve come to the right site. There are numerous educational and research articles to access and if you go to the site, click on “Resource Library” and then explore the clinical, education and research links you will discover the world of wound care!

www.cawc.net

– Catherine Marsden

Prevent Falls in Older Adults

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Support and reminders may be needed as the new habit is learned. Removing clutter and scatter rugs (or at the very least, tacking the scatter rugs down with duct tape), and avoiding the use of reading glasses when walking on stairs can help prevent falls.

Education and Equipment: Falls Prevention Programs help program participants, their families and team members to reduce falls risks. These include walking programs and use of appropriate walking aids. Walkers and canes need to be used in the correct hand and need to be the proper height (at the hip).

Health Management: It is essential to consult a health care professional such as a physiotherapist prior to purchasing equipment such as a walking aide, raised toilet seat, footwear, etc. Have family doctor and eye doctor checkups annually, including hearing checks, bone density tests, blood pressure monitoring, diabetes mellitus testing, and medication reviews (eg. heart meds, etc).

Clothing and Footwear: Ensure night gowns are not too long. Ensure shoes are low-heeled, have rubber soles and have supportive arches and heel areas.

Activity: Otago* exercises, T'ai Chi and other balance and walking exercises help persons to maintain their balance and muscle strength. It is also important for seniors to have social activity to help keep them active and happy!

Hip Safe Protectors: Hip Safe Protectors prevent hip fractures during a fall, if they are worn properly. They can be worn over the pants

and Velcroed at the hip area, or can be worn inside the pants underneath the underwear. The newer Hip Safe protectors are crotchless, and can stay in place when pulling down under wear or continence products. They cost around \$100 and can be purchased from Self Care, Davies Pharmacy, or other pharmacies. Consult a health care professional before purchasing them so you obtain the right size and type.

Your Community Responsibility:

Everyone can help prevent falls in their community by lobbying city hall for safer, smoother, pot-hole free sidewalks and crosswalks. Reporting

community hazards can make our local environments safer and can reduce risks of falls in everyone, including our older adults. Ensure bus stop plexiglass is seen by everyone so no one walks into it. Ensure snow or ice on walkways and stairs are cleared or prevented. It's up to each of us to help keep watchful eyes in our communities so we can all walk safely.

* designed by Dr. Campbell from University of Otago in New Zealand

Written by Becky Lynn Brechin, RN, BScN, NCA, GNC(c). Becky is Nurse Coordinator of the West Vancouver Adult Day Centre.

Upcoming Conference for Care Aide Staff

Celebrating Excellence- Sharing our Journey

at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey Campus

Friday, June 12th, 12:00 pm – 6:30 pm.

Saturday, June 13th, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Friday Topics: Palliative Care, Value of Ethics, Crisis Prevention & Intervention.

Saturday Concurrent sessions: Work safe BC, Work place relationships, the Caring Journey, Infection Control, Person Centered Approach, Self Care, etc..

Cost: before May 15th: \$125; after May 15th: \$150

Contact Nancy Graham (604 599 3420) nancy.graham@kwantlen.ca for information on how to register

The following is an article submitted by the winner of the 2008 Education Award:

Post-graduate Degree Through An International University

My pursuit of a post-graduate degree involved self-reflection, very serious thought, and many questions for nurses I know who have completed their degree. A colleague at Kwantlen University highly recommended an international school, the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), Australia. Following a review of the distance curriculum of many Canadian universities I also chose USQ. For me distance education offers flexibility, with no travel requirements and no scheduled class attendance. Working full time I knew a distance program would benefit me, allowing me to work at home, with my own computer, on my schedule.

The USQ Master of Nursing Program has eight courses, five are required and three are elective. Completion is to be in four years. I was fortunate that a leadership program I attended through my employer became an exemption of an elective for me, leaving seven courses to do. I enrolled in February 2008, completed two courses the first semester, three in the second semester. This semester I am completing the final two courses and will be finished mid-June.

There are clear objectives, expectations and course specifications outlined. One positive aspect is that APA is not used. USQ requires Harvard referencing, which is very clear and easily understood. All assignments are to be postmarked by the due date. Sending by courier meant that assignments were received in four or five days. The marking criteria are very clearly outlined for every assignment. Feedback is written and the assignments were returned within a few weeks. This semester one of the

courses requires electronic submissions.

The USQ electronic information is easy to access and there is a wealth of avenues, such as the Library and the Academic Learning Support site. The Study Desk gives access to a home page for every course you are enrolled in and notes the course content with the study schedule shown weekly. There is a social forum for introductions, discussions, questions, etc. The University provides email responses to questions asked, in a timely manner and course guidance is available.



The major benefit of this program is how the course work draws on your professional experiences and current nursing role. The assignments for Health Organization and Development were to discuss a policy you had implemented or participated in the implementation. I was able to report on the Smoke Free Policy that is based in BC legislation. This semester Professional Studies is a self-directed course with a learning contract, pulling together the learning from the previous


courses.

A Master of Nursing program by distance through an international university has been the best choice for me and I have already recommended this program to others.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to GNABC for the education award I received in September 2008.

Respectfully submitted

Yvonne Haney, RN, MN(c), GNC(C)



Place: Coast Bastion Hotel
11 Bastion Street
Nanaimo, B.C.


Date:
Thursday Sept 17, 2009
Wine & Cheese Networking

Sept. 18, 2009
0800-1600
Education/Conference/AGM
Key note speaker: Dr Kim King

Into the future: Innovations for Senior's Health

Sponsored by the
Central/North Island GNABC
Chapter

For more information contact:



Catrin Brodie RN, BSN, GNC
President Central/North Island Chapter
E-mail: Catrin.Brodie@viha.ca
Phone : 250-739-5939



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