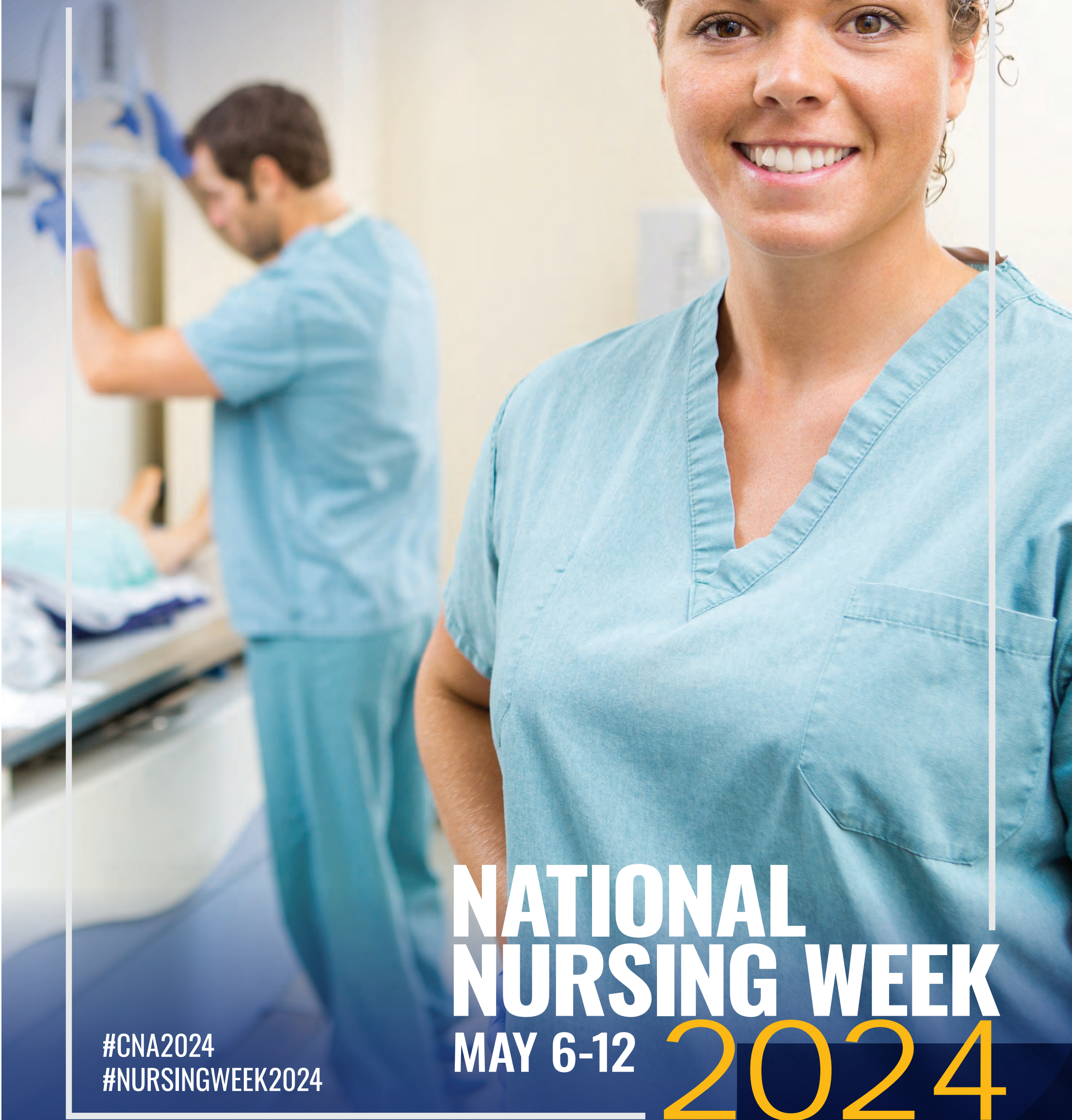


Changing lives.
**SHAPING
TOMORROW.**



**NATIONAL
NURSING WEEK**
MAY 6-12 **2024**

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MAY 6-12, 2024

NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

Changing lives. SHAPING TOMORROW.



Joyce Kristjansson (Photo by Darcy Finley)



Deb Elias (Photo submitted)



Wanda Brine (Photo submitted)

NURSES CHANGE LIVES AND SHAPE TOMORROW

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

Nurses help to foster positive change, both in the lives of their patients and for future of the profession.

Across the world, nurses are honoured each year during the week of May 12, coinciding with the birthday of nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale.

This year, National Nursing Week runs from Monday, May 6 to Sunday, May 12. To recognize nurses' tremendous contributions, the Canadian Nurses Association developed this year's theme "Changing Lives. Shaping Tomorrow."

This theme focuses on how nurses can create change through their direct impact on patients' lives and through further advocacy work. At the same time, this theme considers how nurses shape the future of health care through innovations and advancements. As educators, nurses also share their knowledge, which shapes the next generation of health-care professionals.

It's an ideal opportunity to express gratitude to nurses for the significant impact they have on individuals and communities — as well as on the future of health care.

COLLEGE OF REGISTERED NURSES OF MANITOBA

As regulated health-care professionals, registered nurses (RNs) provide nursing care to individuals, families, communities and groups at all stages of life and health. They assess, diagnose, plan nursing care and evaluate that care, all while working in inter-professional teams.

"You can find RNs practising in schools, people's homes, long-term care settings, as well as in many leadership positions in administration, education and research," says Deb Elias, CEO and registrar of the College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba.

"Registered nurses are involved in literally every aspect and domain of health care."

Nurse practitioners (NPs) engage in advanced nursing practice built on experience and training as registered nurses.

"Equipped with advanced education at the master's level, NPs have the knowledge and skill to manage patient care, including diagnosing, prescribing and evaluating care for individuals, families and communities," Elias says.

Nursing students educated in Canada need to successfully complete an approved baccalaureate-level program. They also need to pass the national licensure exam and meet other

requirements designed to assure safe nursing practice. NPs must first meet all qualifications and achieve registration as an RN. Then they complete a master's degree in the nurse practitioner stream and must pass a national licensure exam for NPs.

As of Dec. 31, 2023, there were 13,891 RNs and 338 NPs in Manitoba.

"RNs and NPs interact with clients and patients during some of the most stressful and happiest times of their lives. These interactions can make a significant difference to the people they are involved with and can potentially change their lives," Elias says.

"RNs and NPs apply a high level of knowledge and expertise. They're compassionate and empathetic, and all of these traits translate to the relationships they build with clients and patients."

The College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba understands the significant workforce challenges affecting the health system in Manitoba and the RNs and NPs who work within it, Elias adds.

"We have been hard at work to understand these challenges and how the college can contribute to finding solutions together with government and stakeholders. Our data show there has been a steadily increasing number of RNs and NPs in Manitoba over the past five years, with 2023 numbers at their highest point in the past 10 years," she says.

"While this information helps paint a picture of the overall number of RNs and NPs eligible to work in the province, we recognize this only tells part of the story. This number needs to be alongside other factors like how many are actively practising, how much they are working and how they are distributed across the health system."

At the same time, Elias encourages anyone interested to consider a career as an RN or NP.

"Nursing is a fulfilling, diverse and challenging career that opens many doors and offers many opportunities for ongoing learning and advancement," she says.

"It involves working with people in all walks and stages of life and is always dynamic and meaningful."

She also acknowledges the significant personal contributions of nurses and thanks them for sharing expertise, knowledge and compassion for the health and well-being of Manitobans.

COLLEGE OF LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES OF MANITOBA

Since the 1940s, licensed practical nurses (LPNs) have practised in Manitoba. Today, nearly 4,000 LPNs across the province practise both independently and collaboratively with other members of the health-care team. In all practice contexts, LPNs are responsible and accountable for their own practice and decisions.

LPNs are educated from the same body of nursing knowledge

as other nurses. To enter the practice, Manitoba LPNs complete a two-year college-level diploma program that includes the study of physical, biological and nursing sciences.

"The focus of the program is on assessment, application, analysis, planning and evaluation," says Jennifer Breton, executive director of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses.

"Practicum experiences are threaded throughout the program, always building on previous knowledge and expanding to include a broader variety of patient populations and nursing practice areas."

Over the course of their careers, LPNs further develop their competence through practice, experience, additional education and training.

"Many practical nursing education programs are — and have for some time been — delivered in communities outside of Winnipeg," Breton says. "Because of this, the LPN profession plays an important role in maintaining health-care service provision in many rural, remote and northern communities."

When reflecting on this year's theme for National Nursing Week, Breton notes that nurses are dedicated professionals who are the backbone of the health system.

"Nurses encounter and care for people at every stage of life, many times at their most vulnerable moment," she says.

"As trusted, competent and compassionate experts, nurses have the unique opportunity to affect change in the lives of patients, families and communities. In that way, as nurses change lives today, they are helping to shape society tomorrow."

Manitoba needs more nurses of every kind, she adds.

"If you appreciate having a range of diverse opportunities in nursing, you may enjoy being an LPN," she says.

"LPNs provide nursing care in all parts of the province in a variety of settings including intensive care units, labour and delivery units, acute care units, community settings and long-term care settings."

For those considering entering the profession, Breton notes that LPNs can work as managers, supervisors, educators, resource nurses and bedside nurses, among other roles.

"LPNs are a critical part of the health-care system, wherever they may work. For those individuals who may want a relatively quick route to become a nurse, the two-year LPN diploma program may suit their needs," Breton says.

"With ongoing education — including specialized training, certifications and bridging opportunities — LPNs can further their career after graduation while continuing to work as a nurse."

And for current LPNs, Breton offers words of gratitude and encouragement.

Continued on page 3 >>



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NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

MAY 6-12, 2024

Changing lives. **SHAPING TOMORROW.**

>> Continued from page 2

“We understand that it is challenging for nurses today,” she says. “The CLPNM values and recognizes the important role our LPNs play in assuring the wellness of Manitobans today, but we also want LPNs to remember the importance of their own health and wellness so that they can continue to shape tomorrow.”

COLLEGE OF REGISTERED PSYCHIATRIC NURSES OF MANITOBA

Registered psychiatric nurses (RPNs) are one of Manitoba’s regulated nursing professions. These nursing professionals provide care with a focus on mental and developmental health, mental illness and addictions.

Other major focuses include therapeutic relationship, emotion, behaviour and cognition, along with a holistic approach to care.

RPNs have been educated in Canada as a distinct profession for more than 100 years. Today, the approved psychiatric nursing education program is offered at sites in both Brandon and Winnipeg by Brandon University, which is a leader in psychiatric nursing education in Canada.

This four-year program leads to a bachelor of science in psychiatric nursing. The program combines psychiatric nursing education with studies in arts and science.

Program graduates are eligible to write qualifying exams for licensure as an RPN with the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba (CRPNM).

Psychiatric nursing education prepares RPNs to understand the complex relationship between emotional, developmental, physical and mental health, as well as the role that social factors, culture and spirituality play in illness and recovery.

Currently, there are more than 1,100 RPNs in Manitoba.

Wanda Brine, CRPNM council chair, says the heart of registered psychiatric nursing practice stems from engaging clients and establishing therapeutic relationships.

“With empathetic understanding, we assess every individual’s unique circumstance from their point of view. It’s the psychosocial position of learning about the individual from all aspects. It’s not just their medical health, social health or mental health, but from all angles,” Brine says.

“Many of our clients are seeking mental health services for the first time. We know that stigma still exists, and this may have prevented them from accessing supports at the onset of their mental health concerns. We strive to make access to the health-care system

and care a comfortable and inviting process. We want everyone to know that it’s OK to seek help and that they’re not alone.”

Registrar and CEO Laura Panteluk says mental health promotion and illness prevention are important parts of psychiatric nursing practice.

“RPNs work alongside individuals, families, groups and communities to leverage strengths, advocate and give voice to those who are most vulnerable, but they also play an integral role in advancing conversations about mental health, stigma and recovery,” Panteluk says.

“With roles in education, advocacy and leadership, RPNs are shaping mental health and addictions care and the next generation of registered psychiatric nurses.”

“Nurses encounter and care for people at every stage of life, many times at their most vulnerable moment.”

Jennifer Breton, executive director of the College of Licensed Practical Nurses

Registered psychiatric nursing is a rewarding career with a broad scope of practice, Panteluk adds. This flexibility allows RPNs to serve specific needs in a range of settings.

National Nursing Week is an opportunity to acknowledge nurses’ roles in the health-care system, as well as their contributions to the health and well-being of Manitobans.

“It is an opportunity to learn about the knowledge, skills and competencies that each of the nursing professions bring — and how we complement one another and work collaboratively to support patient care and our communities,” Brine says, “but also to contribute to building a sustainable, equitable and a culturally safe health-care system.”

ASSOCIATION OF REGULATED NURSES OF MANITOBA

The Association of Regulated Nurses of Manitoba (ARNM) represents and supports a wide range of nursing professionals in the province, including NPs, RNs, LPNs, RPNs, graduate nurses, nursing students and former nurses.

As the professional association for nurses in Manitoba, ARNM serves as the voice of the nursing community, advocating for their empowerment as health leaders in various health-care settings. Currently, ARNM has about 5,000 members.

Executive director Joyce Kristjansson says their mission is to advance the nursing field and champion the public’s interests through promoting and recognizing excellence in nursing practice.

“Nurses fill so many roles in supporting the health of Manitobans,” she says. “Much of what we do is changing the lives of individuals one at a time and, by doing that, shaping the future of our province.”

There’s a need for more nurses in Manitoba, Canada and around the world, she adds.

“There are currently over 2,500 vacant nursing jobs in Manitoba. Nursing is a people-centred profession and a great mix of science and caring. Nurses need to know and understand how to relate to people, provide support and caring, while staying competent with multiple scientific and technical changes in health care,” Kristjansson says.

“It is a learning profession, one in which you can do many different things while still being a nurse. Over my career, I have provided care in small rural hospitals and large urban ones. I have worked in acute care, rehabilitation and long-term care. I have been at the bedside, been a teacher, manager and researcher.”

As knowledgeable professionals, nurses work independently and within teams to help provide health care.

“We know that health is provided in many more ways than through the health system,” she adds, “and we support the need to work on issues of poverty, homelessness and other social issues to improve the health of Manitobans.”

ARNM is hosting an upcoming conference called “Change Starts Here: The Power of Nurses” on June 14. This comprehensive day of learning, empowerment and networking is designed specifically for nurses in Manitoba.

Kristjansson invites all nurses to join the drive for positive change and harness the influential role of nurses in health care.

For more information, visit arnm.ca or call the office at 204-992-1520.

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A supportive team of nurses makes all the difference at HSC Women's Hospital. Left to right: Amanda Neufeld, Sarah Henderson, Nicole Schaworski, Sarah Minor, Naomi Oldcotton, Sara Cranwill and Terra Buisse. (Photo by Darcy Finley)

FOR THE LOVE OF NURSING

BY JANINE LEGAL

Wellness is vital for everyone, and when we need any kind of medical assistance, we have to rely on others to help get us through.

For more than 16 years, Sarah Minor has been working as a nurse in labour and delivery at the Health Sciences Centre (HSC) Women's Hospital. In that time she's seen a lot. She's watched improvements in staffing and appreciates the newly expanded space allowing for better patient care. She's also been up close and personal in welcoming new life into the world many times over — and every single time, that moment has been unforgettable.

A memorable career moment for Minor occurred when she got to bring her teenage daughter along for "take your kid to work day" to experience what it's really like to be a nurse. A patient had consented to allow Minor's daughter to watch the birth from a corner in the room — and there she stood, witnessing a new little human being born.

"Her eyes opened wide," Minor recalls. "She looked at me differently after that."

She was grateful to share the moment with her daughter, who has since expressed interest in possibly pursuing a career in nursing herself — just not in labour and delivery.

Minor knew early on that she wanted a career in nursing, specifically in labour and delivery, where she has remained since graduating in 2007.

"I'm a naturally caring person and I really enjoy helping. That's who I am," she says. "I want the best for everyone. I find childbirth amazing and fascinating."

In January 2023, Minor took on the additional responsibility of nurse educator at HSC Women's Hospital.

"The position has allowed me to stay in labour and delivery, focusing on helping train and support new staff and doing provincial and site orientation," she says, citing the importance of sharing information about upcoming changes, rollouts, guidelines and policies. "I love my job. I consider it a huge privilege to care for patients and their families during labour."

With her new role, Minor gets time with patients on the floor, so she has the opportunity to educate them to make choices and advocate their wishes to the rest of the team. In addition, she now gets to share her skills and knowledge by training other nurses.

"I love teaching. Each month is different. Some months we have heavy teaching loads in a classroom setting, in-person sessions where you can be more interactive and retain knowledge," she says.

"It's so important to have that kind of participation. On days when I don't teach, I'm part of multiple committees, working groups to enhance patient care."

For Terra Buisse, manager of health services at HSC Women's Hospital in labour and delivery, it's clear to see Minor's commitment to patient care.

"She is one of the most compassionate people I know," Buisse says. "She is often one of the first people to volunteer to help — without even being asked. When she sees that the unit is busy, she will jump into action and put on scrubs to help out the nurses on the floor and to ensure that our patients stay safe. All in all, she is an incredible nurse and an even more incredible person."

"I love my job. I consider it a huge privilege to care for patients and their families during labour."

— Sarah Minor, nurse educator at HSC Women's Hospital

Minor admits the work can be challenging, but having a supportive team makes all the difference.

"The labour and delivery nurse team feels like family. We are so lucky to have a strong, amazing group of people. We learn from each other," she says.

"People are willing to work so hard for each other. Even in the most challenging times, we are continuously putting patients first. We love what we do; you really have to be dedicated to do this work."

Nurses are trained to practise under stress, and they become stronger with more experience to cope with demanding roles, Minor adds.

"We wouldn't be nurses if we didn't want to provide great patient care," Minor says. "We really have your best interests at heart. We want to treat everybody with respect and allow them to have autonomy in their care. That is one of our top priorities."

This Mental Health Awareness Week we would like to recognize the extraordinary efforts all nurses make in improving mental health, and a special shout out to psychiatric nurses who are a critical component of mental health care.

ADVANCING HEALTHCARE

National Nursing Week

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IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL NURSING WEEK,

The CLPNM values and recognizes the important role LPNs play in assuring the wellness of Manitobans today. We urge LPNs to consider the importance of their own health and wellness so that they can continue to shape tomorrow.

College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Manitoba

The CLPNM is the regulatory body that governs the practice of student practical nurses, graduate practical nurses, and licensed practical nurses in Manitoba.

TIME FOR RADICAL CHANGE

A look at the profession of nursing in 2024

BY BRANDI JOHNSON

The state of our health care system is in need of dire repair. The health of the public system was widely discussed during our last provincial election and for many, a campaign commitment from those running for office.

It had to be.

If you have ever needed emergency care, you're aware of the excessive wait times that have become commonplace. If you love someone who's a nurse, you know the increased patient-to-nurse workloads; you might also know the ethical dilemmas that weigh down staff aspiring to offer better care. If you stay abreast of local news, you'll be very familiar with the fact that staff experiencing violence while at work is on the rise.

Mandating a lack of control over one's work/life balance are major issues that must be dealt with. So too is the need for better mental health supports.

Nursing today is a profession rife with struggle and lean on resources. And yet, healthcare is a Canadian cornerstone, arguable a human right. Three years ago, in honour of National Nursing Week, the Manitoba Nurses Union asked Employers to 'Save the Cake!'

Instead, we said we'd rather take an ounce of respect, a slice of work/life balance, and a dollop of dignity. We asked for a system generously sprinkled with sufficient staff. Three years later, we are plagued with an infiltration of for-profit care and a continued dwindling of resources.

This is a serious problem for many reasons, but especially because the public system is essentially competing against itself to solve the critical nursing shortage, we find ourselves in.

Now, not only are we fighting to retain and recruit, but with a high turnover in management and a new government, we are fighting again for dollars to be properly allotted into the public system.

What we are left with is a morally injured workforce that is post-pandemic exhausted and begging for help. By working our nurses to the bone, literally treating

staff like salt mine ponies, with the weight of more patient care on their backs and fewer hours in a day to recover physically, we are burning out our most precious resources, our people, at an alarming rate.

It's time for radical change. It's time to invest in retention. It's time to make nursing a coveted job once again. It's time to support our new grads instead of paying out nearly 1M hours in overtime and agency use to for-profit private businesses.

This must stop today.

This week, we celebrate National Nursing Week and the nurses who've found the strength to keep going, those who continue to care for Manitoba patients. This week we need to start to think about caring for the people who care for Manitoba's patients.

This week we are calling for radical measures to stop the degradation of our public healthcare system and those who hold it together.

Because the same shift, different day mentality is not only shameful, it's not Manitoban. ●



Instead, we'll take an ounce of respect, a slice of work/life balance, and a dollop of dignity, generously sprinkled with sufficient staff.

This recipe yields one new contract.

Pictured to the right is a visual excerpt from 2021's *Save the Cake Campaign* that Manitoba Nurses Union ran for National Nursing Week. This campaign consisted of a variety of visuals that depicted the need for more serious measures to show staff appreciation.

I AM A NURSE.

Radical change starts with retention. It looks at ways to eliminate violence in the workplace.
 Radical change invests in the public system rather than for-profit private care.
 It's about investing in the mental and physical wellness of staff, creating safe nurse-patient ratios and auditing culture. That's the future. That's radical.

TOGETHER, WE CAN CREATE RADICAL CHANGE.

MNUNITY

Manitoba nurses Union

Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to view MNUnity: I Am A Nurse or visit manitobanurses.ca

MAY 6-12, 2024

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GRATITUDE AND SUPPORT FOR
MANITOBA'S NURSES

Premier Wab Kinew met with health-care students at Red River College Polytechnic. (Photos submitted)

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

It's an act of love to work in health care — particularly in the field of nursing. So says Premier Wab Kinew, noting that nurses are the backbone of health care in Manitoba — in the community, in health centres and at hospital bedsides.

"Every day, you take care of Manitobans in their most vulnerable moments," Kinew says. "And, in response, our government will take care of you, the nurses working in Manitoba today."

He acknowledges that it's become extremely challenging to provide care as a nurse, particularly during the last few years.

"The hours are long, the cases are complex, the shifts are exhausting and sometimes you don't feel safe when you go to work. We've heard this reality from nurses in every part of our province," he says.

"To the nurses who are on the front lines and at the bedside right now: we need you. We need you to continue with the excellent

work you are doing. Nurses are there for us. And I want the nurses of our province to know that we're going to be there for you too."

The current provincial government is listening to front-line staff and working with them to rebuild health care together, he notes.

"It starts with changing the culture of health care in our province so that, no matter which setting you work in, you are able to provide care with the safety, respect and dignity you deserve," Kinew says.

"At the same time, we are going to hire hundreds more nurses — including those who are internationally educated and those who are newly graduated in Manitoba. We're going to make it easier to choose a future in nursing and to keep practising in the career you love."

The best solutions come from the front lines, he adds.

"We've heard that expertise in every room we have shared with nurses — in every stop of our health-care listening tour," Kinew says.

"So I want to encourage you to keep sharing your knowledge with us. If you have a concern, a new idea or a story to share, please reach out to us. We are listening."

To all of Manitoba's nurses, Kinew has a message to share: "We need you. We need you, nurses in every part of Manitoba, to join us as we rebuild health care — because help is on the way."

For Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care Minister Uzoma Asagwara, the connection to National Nursing Week is a personal one.

"I am a psychiatric nurse — and I absolutely love being a nurse. There are other nurses in my family as well. People put their trust in nurses. It's a sacred responsibility to provide care at the bedside, to sit with families in their time of need and provide the compassion and expertise they count on for themselves and their loved ones and communities," Asagwara says.

"I've always felt so grateful that I chose nursing as a path. It's incredibly rewarding. I also love being able to work with nurses and listen to their expertise and their voices now so we can create a health-care system that serves Manitobans in the best ways possible."

The health minister also expressed appreciation for this year's National Nursing Week theme: "Changing Lives. Shaping Tomorrow."



Health, Seniors and Long-Term Care Minister Uzoma Asagwara is proud to be a psychiatric nurse. (Photo by Darcy Finley)

"I love this theme because it really speaks to what is at the heart of nursing as a profession. Every single day, nurses are changing lives for the better. They are creating solutions, doing research and providing care that directly impacts the lives of Manitobans for the better. The work that nurses do every single day helps shape health care for tomorrow," Asagwara says.

"That's why it's so important for me, as someone who worked on the front lines as a nurse and as someone who now has the privilege of serving in the role of health minister. It's such an incredible opportunity to work with nurses who are changing lives and shaping outcomes every day to create a path forward that strengthens health care for future generations."

The provincial government supports nurses and values their expertise, the health minister adds.

"Our government immediately began the work of showing nurses that we respect them through action — starting a listening tour, implementing policies, making investments and working to change the culture in health care," Asagwara says.

"The advantage we have in Manitoba's health-care system is we have the best people. We have the best nurses in the country working right here in Manitoba. Treating them with respect, valuing their expertise, letting them know that we have their backs is fundamental to retaining, training and recruiting them throughout the system."

And for nurses who are new to the profession, the future is bright.

"In this role, I've had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of new nursing grads. I remember what it was like being a new graduate — the excitement, the anxiety, the pride that you feel entering this profession, which is a calling," Asagwara says.

"I want to say thank you to the new grads who have chosen this sacred path. I'm excited to work with them and support them on their journey."

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Changing lives. **SHAPING TOMORROW.**

NURSING IN THE NORTH

BY KRISTIN MARAND

Brittany Lamb, a regional clinical educator in Thompson, finds immense fulfilment in her job, which combines nursing, teaching and mentorship.

Following in her grandmother's footsteps, Lamb pursued her health-care education at University College of the North and went on to work in the Thompson Hospital emergency room. As her family grew, she needed more flexibility and took on a role that allowed her to continue some clinical work but also welcomed new nurses into the fold and prepared them for their careers.

"My position is nursing education within the health-care system. I teach front-line staff courses and orientation and provide clinical unit teaching," she says.

"I also do policy work, building policies that guide clinical practice for nursing, and provincial work, where we help roll out provincial education pieces to our facilities. And I still work a little bit clinically on the unit."

Much of Lamb's work centres around best practices, so she constantly researches, updates and educates to help nurses navigate the ever-changing health-care system. Lamb teaches orientation sessions, provincially mandated courses, facility policy and processes, and emergency-based courses such as advanced cardiac life support and safe patient handling.

Lamb's position is regional, which means travel throughout the large and remote Northern Health Region (NHR). The NHR has a population of slightly more than 74,000 people spread over 396,000 square kilometres, accounting for just under six per cent of the provincial population. The main NHR sites include Thompson, Leaf Rapids, Gillam, The Pas, Flin Flon, Snow Lake and several smaller public health sites. The distance and remoteness can present challenges.

"Travel is an issue for staff and patients," Lamb says. "You have to take the weather into account when planning anything, when

we plan courses or when we want to go to some of our smaller sites. Sometimes we have to drive four hours north of Thompson on gravel roads. It's far and it can be challenging, but I've met some of the most amazing people through my work."

Another challenge is attracting nurses to the North. But for Lamb, the beauty of the area and the resilience of the people balance out the challenges. She cherishes the many lakes, trees, fishing and opportunities to be out on the land.

"I feel quite passionate about the North. It's far. It can be challenging, but I've met some of the most amazing people through my work. You'll find some of the most resilient and amazing people in the North, and for many people, the North keeps drawing you back," she says.

"You'll get to do work in the North earlier in your career than you would be able to do in the South; opportunities for work and growth up here are huge."

The themes for National Nursing Week 2024 are "changing lives" through patient impact and advocacy and "shaping tomorrow" through innovation and education. Lamb sees both those things happening in the NHR. She's proud of the advocacy she's seen and been a part of. Thanks to the diligence and persistence of nurses in Thompson, the city now has an outpatient IV program, which has cut down wait times for receiving outpatient IV infusions and increased comfort and accessibility for patients.

Lamb is excited about

the innovative work being done in the region to better serve the Indigenous population of northern Manitoba. In partnership, MKO/KIM and Northern Health Region recently issued a declaration to address Indigenous-specific racism. Furthermore, her job as an educator directly impacts the next generation of nurses, and she highly values the ability to connect with new nurses and support them through their training and early careers.

"My job is closely tied to the next generation. We do an orientation session for students when they come into our facilities to do their final placement. That's where we meet people; then they know who we are. We find them in our facilities when they're working, and we're able to connect with them," she says.

"We want to support them as best we can with robust orientation and then mentorship programs so we can keep connected with them as they work through that first year in nursing because it can be tough."



Brittany Lamb is a regional clinical educator in Thompson. (Photo submitted)

Thank You, Nurses!



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MAY 6-12, 2024

NATIONAL NURSING WEEK

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EDUCATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF NURSES

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Rhonda Campbell (left) is an Indigenous nurse practitioner and director of Mahkwa omushki kiim: Pathway to Indigenous Nursing Education at the University of Manitoba College of Nursing. Danielle Yaffe (right) is an award-winning educator and instructor at the College of Nursing. (Photos by Darcy Finley)

BY JANINE LEGAL

While not everyone can say that they are changing lives through their work, nurse educators are doing just that.

Rhonda Campbell, Indigenous nurse practitioner (NP) and director of Mahkwa omushki kiim: Pathway to Indigenous Nursing Education (PINE) at the University of Manitoba College of Nursing, says educators draw on the best available evidence to educate and shape the future for nurse practitioner practice.

"We include it in our curriculum so that NP students are best prepared in meeting those competencies. PINE is a support unit within the UM College of Nursing specifically for Indigenous students that are interested in nursing. We support them academically and also with tutoring access," Campbell explains.

"We arrange for smaller classes in biology, microbiology and math. We also have a Knowledge Keeper on our team for cultural supports. We have an Indigenous student advisor who is part of our team who is very culturally informed and very knowledgeable about the academic processes. Once students are admitted into the College of Nursing, they are also provided with those same supports, academic and cultural, as well as financial supports."

The bachelor of nursing program has 30 seats designated under the Canadian Indigenous category, and applicants must meet the required GPA and indicate they are of Indigenous ancestry. The master of nursing and nurse practitioner programs also have designated 20 per cent of the seats for Indigenous students.

"The faculty members are the cream of the crop. They've been practising for a number of years as educators at the university," Campbell says. "But there's more work to be done to make the master's program more accessible to remote and rural learners and to Indigenous nurses."

Currently, there are 121 students in the PINE Indigenous Education Unit, and 60 per cent are in the 28-month bachelor of nursing program.

"The college supports nurse educators in terms of preparing us with supports to become better educators. We have access to additional training, professional development, continuing education and conferences we can attend," she says. "We have support in terms of our colleagues. We often network and discuss how classes are going. We have a good working environment with great support from leadership and colleagues."

As a nurse practitioner faculty member at the College of Nursing, Campbell appreciates the connection with future NP students, while also sharing about the historical and contemporary issues in Indigenous health.

"The College of Nursing is building towards reconciliation as part of the strategic priorities and specifically on calls to action, increasing the number of Indigenous health professionals and also providing culturally safe education for health-care providers," she says.

Students learn in multiple settings including classrooms, clinical settings and simulation labs, where they engage in scenarios that build skills in assessment, critical thinking, communication and clinical decision-making.

"As students move through courses, they acquire not only knowledge and skills but the professional values and attributes that are necessary to be safe, empathetic and reliable in the role," Yaffe says. "As faculty, we strive to inspire students to be passionate about the profession and commit to nursing excellence through lifelong learning, advocacy and leadership."

Each year, UM College of Nursing admits three cohorts of 120 bachelor of nursing students — plus 40 more in The Pas/Thompson — with an additional 20 in the master of nursing program, 25 in the nurse practitioner program and eight in PhD studies.

Grateful for the leadership team and their strong support through professional development opportunities, Yaffe says they gained more understanding of blended learning, online platforms and the virtual world.

"We have much more information on equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility than in the past," she says. "We want to train nurses to be reflective in their practice and be culturally sensitive to all people they care for."

Yaffe notes that simulation and virtual reality play a vital role in nursing education.

"It provides students with the opportunity to practise patient care in a simulated clinical environment. Educators can

create a virtual patient room or entire ward with all the equipment and tools available virtually," she says. "It also allows for multiple people to work together within the same scenario and they do not need to be within the same physical space."

Since graduating from the University of Manitoba, Yaffe is proud to now be a faculty member at the College of Nursing, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, and is inspired by the passion and creativity of her colleagues and their motivation to think outside the box.

"It is an absolute privilege to be a teacher of nursing, working with students and preparing future nurses for an incredible career," she says. "It's why we take our jobs so seriously: we want the graduates to be great nurses."

"We want to train nurses to be reflective in their practice and be culturally sensitive to all people they care for."

**– Danielle Yaffe,
instructor at the
College of Nursing**

"We are also in the process of finding ways to Indigenize the nursing curriculum, which is led by our Indigenous Pedagogy and Curriculum Working Group. It's getting done, but it takes time. The college is committed to reconciliation."

Danielle Yaffe, an award-winning educator and instructor at the College of Nursing, says that preparing competent nurses for the future is a high priority.

"We have a big responsibility to the public to ensure emerging nurses are equipped with the knowledge, skills and values to deliver competent and safe care," she says. "We also have a responsibility to our students. We want our students to feel prepared for the realities of the role and possess the tools to have a successful and fulfilling career."

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Changing lives. *SHAPING TOMORROW.*

SOUTHERN COMFORTS:

RURAL REGION'S PALLIATIVE CARE TEAM ENHANCES QUALITY OF LIFE

BY LINDSEY WARD

Finding hope and comfort when there is no cure in sight seems like an impossible task. But the Southern Health-Santé Sud's tight-knit palliative care team is devoted to helping terminally ill patients live their final days to the fullest.

"I want people to think of palliative care as a very active level of care; it's just that the goal is different," says Shannon Reimer, palliative care co-ordinator for Southern Health-Santé Sud. "We might not be able to cure, but we are actively trying to achieve that comfort and quality."

Palliative care involves a wide range of medical and other services, from pain relief to meeting specific psychological and spiritual needs as well as providing support to the patient's family. Reimer, who has been with the region's palliative care program since 2017, says we live in a society where most people aren't comfortable talking about those final days. That leads to misconceptions about palliative care itself, which is often thought to be a small portion of a patient's actively dying phase. Really, it's an entire chapter of their life.

"I always tell people, 'Think of your life like a story book.' There are different chapters, and

the last chapter of life is a whole last chapter and that's why the palliative care team works so hard. We have one last chapter; there are no do-overs," Reimer says. "Some people have told me, 'Well, you're just going to come here and talk about dying.' But no. While we do have hard conversations and talk about dying, yes, we also talk about what brings you quality in your days."

The notion of "quality" looks different to each patient, and achieving it within the rural setting of the Southern Health-Santé Sud — which covers 27,025 square kilometres including 20 rural municipalities, seven municipalities, four cities, four towns and seven First Nation communities — poses unique challenges. Thankfully, the region's palliative care team of 24 — comprised of 13 nurses, three social workers, four doctors, an administrator, a director, a manager and Reimer — have within the past year secured the additional funding and resources they require to meet the evolving needs of their patients.

A new urgent on-call line, for example, allows caregivers to connect with palliative care outside of working hours. The funding has also allowed them to bolster their presence in personal care homes. Further, the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer has funded a project in Southern Health-Santé Sud that will look at improving care within the region's Indigenous communities.

"We have a few (Indigenous) communities here and they are all a little bit different in terms of resources, so that's a project that's really near and dear to our hearts right now," Reimer says.

A group of volunteers provides further support

for both patients and caregivers, who face many logistical challenges due to their location. Many Canadians these days prefer to die at home when possible, but in a rural setting, that involves careful planning to ensure patients have adequate equipment — most of which comes through Winnipeg — and medications in municipalities where pharmacy hours are limited.

Challenges aside, there is something to be said about the level of support a rural atmosphere can provide.

"In these small-town communities, that sense of community and belonging is real," Reimer says, "and when you're dying, that familiarity and community is even more important."

Southern Health-Santé Sud's palliative staff are consistently working to better themselves as contributors to these communities. Reimer, along with a doctor and social worker from the unit, recently guest-starred on Dr. Hsien Seow and Dr. Samantha Winemaker's popular *The Waiting Room Revolution* podcast, where they discussed palliative care in a rural setting. Several members of the team are facilitators of the Canadian Serious Illness Conversation Guide, and Reimer herself is raising awareness about her line of work as the first Manitoban facilitator for the non-profit Pallium Canada.

Reimer says her line of work is not for everyone, and she's often on the receiving end of comments like "I can't believe you do that." But she and her colleagues believe palliative care is their calling and truly see the opportunity to help their patients write their own final chapters as a highly fulfilling privilege.

"Palliative care will either suck you in or it will spit you out. You're either meant for it or you're not," she says.

"I know we all talk about the fact that life is short and precious. We get to see this every day, and I find this gives us a good outlook on life. So although sometimes the work is heavy, I do think it affects us in a positive way as well."



Shannon Reimer is a palliative care co-ordinator for Southern Health-Santé Sud. (Photo submitted)



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LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

BY TODD LEWYS

To say nursing is in Patrice Lee's blood would be an understatement.

That's because she represents the third generation of nurses in her family.

"Both my grandmother and mother were nurses," says Lee, who is in her 26th year of nursing. "So my decision to go into nursing was a natural one. I couldn't see myself doing anything else."

That said, when she graduated in 1988 from the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology Kelsey campus in Saskatoon (now known as Saskatchewan Polytechnic), there weren't a lot of opportunities for new graduates.

"I ended up getting on at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon working in the acute medicine unit," she recalls. "It was a busy unit where I dealt with respiratory issues and kidney transplants. It was a really good experience."

Two years later, she moved east to take on a new challenge.

"I moved to Winnipeg and landed at Seven Oaks General Hospital in Winnipeg. During my 12 years there, I had lots of different opportunities, including being discharge co-ordinator and working in emergency."

After doing about 15 years of front-line acute work, she decided to go back to school to upgrade her nursing credentials while still finding the time to practise her profession.

"I went back and got my bachelor of nursing and graduated in 2016," she says. "I thought getting the degree would open more leadership opportunities up."

Her dream job was to be a clinical resource nurse, focusing on quality patient care by identifying staff training needs and improving teamwork among care providers; however, at that time, there weren't a lot of opportunities for that role.

"This led me to explore different opportunities such as the facilitator for patient flow and patient care team manager at Concordia Hospital from 2012 to 2017. My transition between roles went well as I was working with a very supportive leadership team," she says.

"There were lots of learning curves, but I was still able to advocate for front-line staff. I still did rounds along with doing problem solving and planning."

As always, Lee savoured the experience.

"I was just trying to learn," she says. "It was another layer of the profession I hadn't seen before."

As fate would have it, she would have the opportunity to experience another layer of the profession, this time outside Winnipeg.

"A rural position opened, and I made the difficult decision to leave Concordia and go to Stonewall," she says. "I was there for five years, and then the opportunity for director of health services

with the Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority came open. That's where I am now. It's been quite a journey."

Lee adds that her nursing journey has been a labour of love.

"Every step of the way, I made the decision to move because I wanted to be challenged and learn something new," she says. "Today, the opportunities are endless for nurses coming out of school. When I graduated, it was a different environment — you just wanted to have a job. There are more incentives now."

With over a quarter-century of experience under her belt, she is now putting the many lessons she's learned into practice.

"I think it's important for leaders to lead by example. It's important to get to know the staff and let them get to know you," she says. "As a leader, you need to be transparent as it's important for developing a high level of trust as a team."

Support is also important, says Lee.

"As leaders, we need to create an environment where people feel they can always ask questions," she says. "Our job is to help staff do things like navigate difficult conversations with patients. That support makes a huge difference with staff members."

She notes that being a leader is a big responsibility.

"My philosophy is that our drive to be a leader is to make things better so that case outcomes are better. To do that, we need to listen to patients and listen to teams for ideas," she says. "By listening, we revamped the whole way we deliver education to staff. There are more courses and better support so every team can provide better care. I've learned so much with every team I've been on."

If there's a key quality a leader should possess, Lee says it's empathy.

"It's huge. Leaders need to be empathetic, compassionate and supportive — and listen to their team to see what they're going through and listen to their ideas," she says. "The rewards outweigh the bad in this profession. We need to celebrate our victories together."

After all her years of nursing, she remains passionate about her job.

"I've never once thought of leaving," Lee says. "I've been lucky to have the opportunities I've had and to have worked with many great teams and supportive leaders."



Patrice Lee represents the third generation of nurses in her family. (Photo submitted)

PSYCHIATRIC NURSE MARKS 50-YEAR MILESTONE

BY JENNIFER MCFEE

A Prairie Mountain Health psychiatric nurse is marking a milestone 50 years in her career, and she still feels passionate about her profession.

Betty Frykas started her intensive two-year training program in 1972 at Brandon Mental Health Centre (BMHC). In 1974, she graduated from nursing school in a class of about 40 students. She launched her career as a staff nurse on admission to chronic and geriatric wards.

"I started in the days of carrying a ring of skeleton keys. There was not a computer or cell phone in sight. We wore the pristine white uniforms, starched caps and those beautiful nurses' capes," she recalls.

"At BMHC, we were family — teamwork came naturally and was essential. Our wards frequently had populations of 60-plus with only two nurses working, yet the work was always done, and we were happy. The hospital population at that time was approximately 600."

Then, in 1979, Frykas relocated to The Pas, where she worked as a community mental health worker.

"I worked alone for several years, travelling to Easterville, Grand Rapids, Moose Lake and Cormorant and provided service to The Pas. Those years were stressful, busy and difficult but so valuable to my personal growth and knowledge," she says. "Our team of one eventually grew to add another nurse and supervisor."

In 1986, Frykas accepted a senior mental health therapist position in northeast Alberta. Along with the team there, she provided services to outlying areas, including CFB Cold Lake.

Three years later, she returned to Manitoba after her mother was diagnosed with cancer. She settled in Dauphin and worked for a

few months in a child protection position with Child and Family Services before returning to the mental health program as a case manager.

She stayed in that position until 2011 when Frykas retired from her role — but her retirement didn't last long.

"After taking the weekend off, I was back as casual on a Monday evening in the mental health crisis position, where I've remained for the past 13 years, now in a 0.7 EFT position. I'm still in Dauphin, working for Prairie Mountain Health," she says.

"We take direct calls from individuals in crisis and try to resolve their situation through talk therapy and implementing coping strategies. At times, we direct our callers to our local ER for a full assessment or utilize the services of the RCMP. In consultation with the doctor, we may recommend an admission when a severe mood disorder, psychosis or thoughts of self-harm are evident. We provide service after the regular office hours."

Looking back at her five-decade career, Frykas has experienced the evolution of psychiatric nursing.

"As we evolved to community nursing, it was mandatory at that time that all community mental health workers completed a long list of core modules, and many weeks were spent attending lectures, often week-long, followed by passing university-based exams," she says.

"Our college (College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba) has always played an integral role in all RPNs maintaining professional conduct and standards through ongoing education and continued competency audits."

For Frykas, some of the best parts of the job come from connecting with people while also building trust and rapport. She feels honoured that so many people have trusted her enough to share their stories and allowed her to help them on their personal healing journeys.

"Being a good listener is of the utmost importance. We must accept that making changes in one's life is frightening and difficult," she says. "A lot of patience and empathy is needed to help patients overcome their fears and understand their resistance."



Betty Frykas has been a psychiatric nurse for 50 years. (Photo submitted)

And for anyone considering a career in psychiatric nursing, Frykas offers a few observations gleaned over the past 50 years.

"Psychiatric nursing is a very rewarding career," she says. "Every aspect of the job tests your patience and understanding of human behaviour — and it challenges you. It's definitely not boring."

As she prepares to wind down towards a second attempt at retirement this fall, Frykas reflects on her rich and varied career.

"It's been an incredibly exciting journey. I will greatly miss the years I dedicated to the profession and many clients I've hopefully helped along the way," says Frykas, adding that she has no regrets.

"I still love and am passionate about challenges, but after 50 years, it's time to pass the torch on, don't you think?"

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