



# Nurses' Notes

September 2011

Newsletter of the Yukon Registered Nurses Association

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT *Peggy Heynen, RN*



Your YRNA board of directors, along with the assistance of the staff, has been doing some really great work in identifying and clarifying YRNA's priorities. It may sound like this should be a simple process but, believe me, it's not. Through many hours of brainstorming and sharing of perspectives and ideas, an overarching theme of "Primary Health Care" came out of our initial work with 3 main subheadings under that umbrella—optimizing health, inter-professional practice, and championing the voice of Yukoners.

This led to areas of focus and identifying strategies we might use to reach our set goals. For instance, a communication plan that incorporates disseminating information for the public as well as providing strong professional representation can fit into any or all of the 3 categories listed above.

We then categorized these ideas, put them under headings and developed some areas of focus, short and long term goals, actions and evaluation. We are well on our way to completing this work and hope to have an effective working document prepared soon that will help guide the work of YRNA over the next year and into the next 5 years.

This leads well into another area that has been grabbing lots of media attention lately and that's the "lack of physicians" and people who don't have a family physician. Hopefully many of you are aware of YRNA's work over the years in engaging with other professionals to try to establish a collaborative practice clinic that meets the needs of the public, providing the right professional at the right time and making "access to healthcare" more flexible and public/patient/client focused. I feel that by identifying our priorities and having a clear vision of how we can obtain our goals, we will be more strategic and effective in our efforts to provide quality healthcare "in the interest of the public".

So as the politicians start hitting the streets and knocking on your door asking for your support, be informed, be prepared with some hard hitting questions and make your position known. Check out each Party's platform and challenge them in areas of healthcare.

Call the YRNA office and ask for information to better assist you to make the most of your conversation with your politician. Come out to the Coffee Talk on September 21 and tell us what matters to you.

We are not only nurses, we are "the public" and healthcare in the Yukon matters to us all.

## INSIDE

- Message from the Executive Director
- Invitation to Participate in Regulation Consultation
- Coffee Talk Info
- Reprint of Letter to Minister of Health
- Reprint of Letter to Editor
- Education Fund News
- CNA Biennium Information
- CAPWHN: New Specialty Association
- Call for Honourary Member Nominations
- Regulated Nurses in Canada: What do we know about them?

... and more

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# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Patricia McGarr, RN



As you will see from this newsletter, things have not quietened down at YRNA over the summer months. However, much of the work we have been engaged in has been for positive reasons, so we really can't complain.

In this newsletter will see a letter of invitation with links to the consultation process related to YRNA's revision of regulations. These changes will modernize our regulations, further clarify regulatory and licensure requirements and provide some detail about the scope of practice of nurse practitioners. While the regulations fall under YRNA's authority to develop, the Cabinet has the ultimate authority to approve them. Thus, the joint consultation with the Department of Health and Social Services. I hope as many of you as possible will read and respond to the consultation document. (See letter on p.2)

Meanwhile, a couple of committees continue to work on aspects of the new regulations related to authorizing the practice of nurse practitioners—the *Nurse Practitioner Implementation Working Group* and the *Nurse Practitioner Steering Committee*. I would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to the dedicated YRNA members on these committees who have spent many hours over the last number of years providing thoughtful input throughout the process. I would also like to acknowledge Health and Social Services personnel for their support and hard work. YRNA will certainly make sure that we celebrate and recognize all these individuals when the regulations receive final approval.

Included in this this issue are copies of two recent letters sent by YRNA President Peggy Heynen related to access to health care and comprehensive planning of health programs. The YRNA Board felt that it was important to point out that programming related to health services must be comprehensive and planned. We also feel that the public needs to know that there are a number of alternatives to health care access and delivery and that, in fact, solutions are perhaps simpler than often we think.

These changes will modernize our regulations, further clarify regulatory and licensure requirements and provide some detail about the scope of practice of nurse practitioners. . . . I hope as many of you as possible will read and respond to the consultation document.

There will be a territorial election this fall. The YRNA Board has previously identified health policy priorities and with an election scheduled, this would be an opportune time to promote some of these. We have developed key messages based on those priorities and have planned a Coffee Talk in order to further discuss these with members.

The Coffee Talk will take place at the YRNA office at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, September 21st.

This will be a good opportunity for you all to see our newly renovated space. Our landlord has provided us with a new layout, flooring and the walls have been painted. A thank you to Lisa Wiebe for offering her advice regarding the colour scheme. We also appreciate everyone's patience as we operated off-site for a couple of weeks while the work was being done.

[www.yrna.ca](http://www.yrna.ca)

Check us out!

The YRNA newsletter is published four times a year. Publication dates are February 28th, May 31st, August 31st and November 30th. Deadline for submissions is the 1st day of the month of publication.

Articles and letters are welcome and should be addressed to the Editor. Inclusion of items in the newsletter does not imply endorsement or approval by the YRNA.

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## YRNA BOARD MEMBERS

<b>President</b>	<b>Peggy Heynen</b>
<b>President Elect</b>	<b>Sean Secord</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Sue Starks</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Donna Rowland</b>
<b>Members-at-Large:</b>	<b>Susanne Nageli</b>
	<b>Barb Pollock</b>
	<b>Rachel Burkhart</b>
<b>Public Representative:</b>	<b>Sylvia Riessner</b>

If you would like to receive e-mail notification of YRNA events (Coffee Talks, etc.) please let YRNA know: [admin@yrna.ca](mailto:admin@yrna.ca).

August 5, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

The Yukon Registered Nurses Association (YRNA) and Yukon government are working in partnership on a joint consultation to the proposed Registered Nurses Profession Regulations.

These regulations support the amended *Registered Nurses Profession Act* that was acclaimed in December 2009. They modernize the regulations, address labour mobility and further clarify the licensure and practice of registered nurses in Yukon. In addition, they introduce the scope of practice for nurse practitioner - a new nurse category for Yukon. Nurse practitioners work as part of the health care system and contribute towards improving client health outcomes by increasing accessibility to health care services and filling gaps that presently exist in health care delivery.

Nursing is a self-regulating health profession and YRNA is the regulatory body for nursing in Yukon. As mandated by legislation, YRNA has developed the proposed regulations through considering advice from its Steering Committee, recommendations from its multi-disciplinary Nurse Practitioner Advisory Committee, consultation feedback from its nursing membership and best practices and policy models of other jurisdictions.

YRNA and Yukon government invite you to comment on the proposed regulations. A background document summarizing and explaining the policy directions set out in the regulations is enclosed. A copy of the proposed regulations can be reviewed at <http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/rnp/> or provided to you upon request.

Inquiries and comments to this consultation can be directed to:

Kim Dolhan, Policy Analyst  
Health and Social Services  
Government of Yukon  
Box 2703, Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6  
Phone: 867-667-5695 Fax: 867-667-3096  
Email: [kim.dolhan@gov.yk.ca](mailto:kim.dolhan@gov.yk.ca)

You may respond to the consultation in writing by mailing or faxing your comments. You may also provide comments electronically via email or through an on-line consultation submission at [http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/rnp/rnp\\_consultation.pdf](http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/rnp/rnp_consultation.pdf). Finally, you are welcome to call and discuss any of the issues directly. Comments will be received until September 16, 2011 the date the consultation closes.

We thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:  
*Patricia McGarr, Executive Director*

Original signed by:  
*Sherri Wright, Assistant Deputy Minister*

**Coffee  
Talk**

Wednesday, September 21st  
7:00pm at the YRNA office

This is an opportunity to meet with the  
YRNA Board and fellow members.

Come and have a discussion about YRNA health  
policy priorities and how nurses can contribute to  
the territorial election debate on health.



# Regulated Nurses in Canada: What Do We Know About Them?

As the largest group of health care professionals in Canada, the regulated nursing workforce continues to be one of the Canadian health care system's vital signs.

In 2009, there were 348,499 regulated nurses working in nursing in Canada, according to data collected as nurses register in their profession. Of these, 76.4% were registered nurses (RNs) (including nurse practitioners (NPs), 22.1% were licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and 1.5% were registered psychiatric nurses (RPNs). These proportions have remained relatively steady over the last five years.

The number of regulated nurses in the workforce grew, with an annual percentage change of 2% contributing to an overall growth rate of 8.5% for the 2005 to 2009 period. Both the RN and LPN workforces grew at rates exceeding that of the Canadian population, while the RPN workforce growth kept pace with population growth in the western provinces over the same five-year period.

Nurses come from a variety of educational backgrounds. Overall, in 2009, 7% of the regulated nursing workforce was educated outside Canada.

RNs have enjoyed a steady increase in annual growth of close to 2% per year, with an employed workforce of 266,341 in 2009. There were 789 RNs per 100,000 people in Canada.

It is interesting to note that the number of nurse practitioners (NPs) in Canada has more than doubled over the past five years and increased by 22.4% between 2008 and 2009. In 2009, there were 1,990 NPs employed in nursing in Canada. Nurse practitioners now represent 0.7 % of the total registered nursing workforce.

LPNs are the second-largest group within the regulated nursing workforce. Their numbers have increased by 18.5% between 2005 and 2009. The employed workforce is now 76,944, representing 228 LPNs per 100,000 people. Only 2.3% of these LPNs are internationally educated—the smallest proportion among the three regulated nursing professions.

The RPN workforce grew to 5,214 in 2009, comprising just 1.5% of employed regulated nurses. Representing only the four western provinces where they are regulated, there are 50 RPNs per 100,000 people. Male RPNs represent 22.5% of the RPN workforce, a significantly higher percentage than in the other regulated nursing professions, which are more dominated by women.

Because generational and demographic challenges continue, different strategies may be required to entice and motivate the members of each generation. This will call for a thorough understanding of each group's unique set of characteristics, values and perceptions of the ideal workplace.

*The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides essential information on Canada's health system and the health of Canadians. We are funded by federal, provincial and territorial governments, and guided by a board of directors made up of health leaders from across the country. For more information on CIHI visit [www.cihi.ca](http://www.cihi.ca).*

REVISED May 2011

CIHI Summary—*Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009 (Reference)*  
Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses

The CIHI report *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009* was released in December, 2010.

## WHAT ARE REGULATED NURSES?

*Regulated nurses are the largest group of paid health care workers in Canada. The regulated nursing workforce is made up of three types of professionals: registered nurses (RNs, including nurse practitioners or NPs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and registered psychiatric nurses (RPNs).*

*Registered nurses work both autonomously and with others. They coordinate health care; deliver direct services and support patients in dealing with health, illness, injury and disability. RNs contribute to the health care system through their work in direct practice, education, administration, research and policy in a wide array of settings.*

*Nurse practitioners are RNs with additional educational preparation and experience. NPs may order and interpret diagnostic tests and prescribe pharmaceuticals, medical devices and other therapies, as well as perform procedures within their legislated scope of practice. NPs often work in primary care settings such as community health centres and remote nursing stations.*

*Licensed practical nurses work independently or with other members of the health care team. LPNs assess clients, promote health, prevent illness, provide palliative and rehabilitative care and assist clients to achieve an optimal state of health. Most LPNs work in hospitals, nursing homes or long-term care facilities.*

*Registered psychiatric nurses are educated and regulated as a distinct profession in the four western provinces and one territory of Canada. RPNs provide services to clients whose primary care needs relate to mental and developmental health. The majority of RPNs work in hospitals.*

## Continuing Nurse Education Funds

Further to the information included in the May newsletter, the Education Fund Management Committee has now approved new funding guidelines and criteria. Refer to the YRNA website for full details.

Applications for education funding received by August 31st will be reviewed in early September. The next deadline for applications is November 30th.

## Honourary Membership Call for Nominations

Have you worked with a colleague who has promoted a positive image of the nursing profession? demonstrated an ability to influence nursing practice by leading, supporting and mentoring?

Consider nominating that colleague for YRNA Honourary Membership to recognize his/her contribution to nursing in the Yukon.

Nominations are accepted prior to December 31st. For more information contact the YRNA office at 867-667-4062 or print the nomination papers from the website at [www.yrna.ca](http://www.yrna.ca) (click on 'About YRNA').

## Canadian Nurses Association AGM and Biennium

CNA's 2012 AGM and Biennium will take place in Vancouver. The proximity means that this is a great opportunity for Yukon nurses to participate.

More information will be available in the Canadian Nurse Journal and on the CNA website [www.cna-aicc.ca](http://www.cna-aicc.ca)



PROVIDING WORKSHOPS FOR PERSONAL GROWTH THAT EMPOWER AND MOTIVATE



### CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS

WHITEHORSE - November 1, 2011 (early registration deadline October 11)

Conflict has many sources including disagreements, stress, personality differences and differences of opinions. Results of conflict impacts us individually and often negatively affects the performance of groups. Many conflicts would not spiral out of control if people used conflict resolution techniques that are easy to learn and utilize. This workshop will teach participants to understand the dynamics of conflict and equip them with the skills needed to respond confidently when faced with situations of conflict.

#### Some of the topics covered

- How Conflict Escalates
- Conflict or Misunderstanding - The Power of Assumption
- Practical Skills for Resolution
- Exploring Positions and Interests
- A Resolution Process - Transforming the Argument

### DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

WHITEHORSE - November 2, 2011 (early registration deadline October 12)

This workshop will analyze what is happening in exchanges with difficult people and demonstrate how people can adapt their strategies to bring about more productive conversations with those they find difficult. The effect of communication styles will be explored, in particular, how different styles interact with each other. Participants will also learn how to change their interactions with difficult people in order to influence their behaviour, resulting in more positive outcomes.

#### Some of the topics covered

- The Angry Person - De-escalating Anger
- The Resistant Person - Breaking through Resistance
- The Passive-Aggressive Person - Getting to the Truth
- The Bully - Stopping the Problem Behaviour
- How you can Exert Influence

Fees per workshop: Early registration rate - \$165 + GST Regular registration rate - \$195 + GST

Contact us at: [www.achievecentre.com](http://www.achievecentre.com) • 1.204.452.0180 • [info@achievecentre.com](mailto:info@achievecentre.com)

# REPRINT OF LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF HEALTH

2 August 2011

Glenn Hart  
Minister of Health and Social Services  
Government of Yukon  
Box 2703  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 2C6

Dear Minister Hart:

I am writing to recommend that a meeting of key stakeholders in the health care sector be called to discuss the challenges that currently exist regarding access to health care for Yukoners.

Problems with access to health care in the Yukon are not new – especially for those with chronic diseases and those with multiple health and social difficulties. However, this serious issue has been made more visible in the media in the last few months for a variety of reasons and deficiencies in access and gaps in service have been highlighted. Mental health services, addictions and access to primary care providers in general are obvious concerns and now I believe that there are challenges with access to obstetrical care.

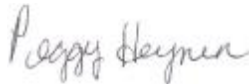
Solutions or ideas to address a number of situations have recently been presented. However, some of these proposed initiatives are short term and appear to have been based on narrow consultation – for example, the plan for additional services in the Emergency Room at Whitehorse General Hospital. This does not take into account the complexity and significant overlap of some of the issues in question. A piecemeal approach to making decisions does not allow for all of the alternatives and input that could be garnered from a variety of possible and informed partners working together.

I would like to propose that appropriate partners who can provide policy input into comprehensive solutions for these health issues come together to talk openly and honestly about challenges and possible answers. This would include representatives from a variety of health professions and the public. In this way a range of informed individuals can be included in discussions where all possible solutions can be presented and duly considered. Options such as midwifery practice, nurse practitioners and interprofessional practice clinics, which are considered standard in other parts of the country, must be part of that discussion.

While these options are being discussed in various venues and work is taking place within the Department of Health and Social Services regarding some of them, these opportunities for alternative solutions have not been explored as part of a comprehensive dialogue that includes all players.

I would be pleased to discuss this proposal with you and the Yukon Registered Nurses Association would be happy to help facilitate a meeting of key representatives on this issue.

Sincerely,



Peggy Heynen, RN  
President

[www.cna-aiic.ca](http://www.cna-aiic.ca)  
**Canadian Nurses Association**

[www.cnps.ca](http://www.cnps.ca)  
**Canadian Nurses Protective Society**

# REPRINT OF LETTER TO THE EDITOR FROM YRNA

16 August 2011

Dear Sir:

I have observed the concerns expressed in the media recently regarding the loss of doctors in our community resulting in a decrease in access to health care services. I don't think it would be appropriate or useful for me to enter into the debate about International Medical Graduates, but I do want to offer some constructive input regarding access to health care that the public might find informative and encouraging.

The inability for any individual to obtain health care services is troubling. However, when we get fixed on the "access to a family physician" discussion, we do not get very far in finding solutions. When we shift the discussion to "access to a primary health care provider" then there are a number of alternatives that could address the issue in the Yukon. In other parts of Canada, a wider number of choices are available to the public when they seek health care and it is my hope that we will soon see these here in the Yukon. I would like to present a number of these options in this letter in order to encourage some constructive public dialogue, to suggest realistic alternatives to what we have presently in Whitehorse, and to provide Yukoners with some optimism regarding possible options that are efficient, effective, economically sound and are focused on the patient/client, family and community.

Regulations authorizing the practice of nurse practitioners in the Yukon are likely to be passed by the end of this year. In fact, at the time of writing this letter, a stakeholder consultation on these regulations is underway. Nurse practitioners exist in all of the other provinces and territories of Canada. These health care providers have the competence to provide comprehensive health assessments, to diagnose health conditions, and to treat and manage acute and chronic illness. They order and interpret screening and diagnostic tests, perform a variety of surgical procedures and prescribe medications. By 2012, it should be possible to access a nurse practitioner as a primary health care provider in the Yukon once the necessary policies have been developed by employers and appropriate government departments. While the Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Registered Nurses Association (YRNA) have been working together to support the implementation of this new role in the Yukon health system, there has been little mention of this impor-

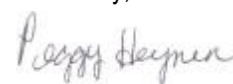
tant health care provider in the media as the debate related to access had unfolded.

Another option is one that has been previously promoted by a number of health professions in the Yukon and which is well established in other parts of Canada – centres or clinics where health professionals work in interprofessional collaborative teams. In these instances patients or clients are able to directly access the health professional that is appropriate for their immediate health concern. For example: a physiotherapist to assess and treat their injured back; a dietician regarding nutritional advice and goals for someone with diabetes; or a pharmacist to provide expert advice on medication and potential side-effects. In this way, patients or clients have direct access to the appropriate health professional for their current health concern and those health professionals have the opportunity to consult and to easily refer patients to each other as necessary, thus reducing barriers and delays in service. The new clinic that has been announced where a physician, social worker and addictions counsellor will be working together is a first step in this direction and we welcome it. However, this is an idea that needs to be expanded to the broader population.

A third consideration is that of enabling the practice of regulated midwives. YRNA strongly supports the introduction of licensed midwives into the Yukon health care system as a valuable option for women and families. The Yukon has been considering regulation of midwives for many years and we would encourage the government to proceed with this policy initiative to facilitate the practice of this important member of the health care team.

Discussions regarding the above options are taking place in a number of forums and the government is making some moves to implement them. However, these solutions have so far been missing in media coverage. It is important that all options for the provision of health care be part of the general debate on the future of health care. YRNA will continue to promote these positive solutions which, if implemented, could go a long way to meeting the needs of health care in the territory.

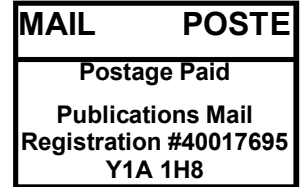
Yours truly,



Peggy Heynen, RN  
President

## ***Yukon Registered Nurses Association***

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## ***Coming Events . . .***

- Sep 21, 2011 COFFEE TALK at the YRNA office. 7:00. Contact: 867-667-4062. Email: [admin@yrna.ca](mailto:admin@yrna.ca)
- Sep 28-30, 2011 Canadian Association of Advanced Practice Nurses (CAAPN) Conference. *Diversity in Advanced Nursing Practice: Boundless Horizons*. Saskatoon. Contact: [www.caapn.com](http://www.caapn.com); [eofdprojects@sasktel.net](mailto:eofdprojects@sasktel.net); 306-651-3118
- Sep 29-Oct 2, 2011 Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada 2011 National Forum Update. *Sustaining a Healthy Future: From Indigenous Knowledge to Cultural Safety*. Winnipeg. Contact: [www.anac.on.ca](http://www.anac.on.ca)
- Oct 2 - 4, 2011 2011 Accelerating Primary Care Conference. Edmonton. Contact: [www.buksa.com/APCC](http://www.buksa.com/APCC) 780-436-0983  
email: [primarycare@buksa.com](mailto:primarycare@buksa.com)
- Oct 16-18, 2011 Canadian Association of Critical Care Nurses (CACCN) Conference. *Dynamics 2011 - Critical Care: Our Kaleidoscope*. London, ON. Contact: [caccn@caccn.ca](mailto:caccn@caccn.ca); 1-866-477-9077; or 519-649-5284.
- Apr 18-21, 2012 5th National Biennial Conference on Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. *It's a matter of Justice!* Vancouver. Contact: [www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/Adults.html](http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/Adults.html) or 604-827-3112
- June 18-20, 2012 CNA Biennial Convention. *Nurses: Movers and Shapers*. Vancouver. Contact: [cna-aiic.ca](http://cna-aiic.ca)