



Clinical Nurse Specialist Association of Ontario
 Association des infirmières et infirmiers
 cliniciens spécialisés de l'Ontario

Newsletter

2021. No. 2

November

New Executive – Fall 2021

Hello Colleagues !



Rashmy Lobo, RN, BSN, MSN, CNS
 President - CNS-ON;

Ontario Representative,
 BOD, CNS-C;

I want to acknowledge and state how incredibly proud of the care we have provided during these very unprecedented times. It has been a difficult year due to the Pandemic; we have been in and out of critical situations with the various waves, vaccine controversies, and delays and longer wait times. This past year, we have sent and received patients for care across jurisdictions and proven to be adept at change and resilient in our approach to patient care.

At the frontlines, we were the ones who faced the prospect of unknowingly spreading the virus to our patients and household members and lived with that fear every single day. These past few months, the Executive members of the CNS-ON continue to promote the CNS profile via our Newsletter publications, social media platforms and actions alerts. I want to thank the Executive as they transition into new portfolios and look forward to their continued support.

Over the past year, we have hosted the *Colleague to Colleague* meetings, bringing us closer together as a family. These conversations guide us through our activities and planning sessions. Connect with us, send us your concerns, suggestions and recommendations.

As the new **President for Clinical Nurse Specialists Association of Ontario** (July 2021-23), I endeavour to continue to give a voice for all Clinical Nurse Specialists, so that they are respected, visible and appreciated for the incredible, sustained work that we do every day.

In Solidarity,

Rashmy Lobo, RN BSN, MSN
 President - CNS-ON.

In this issue:

Articles:

R. Lobo	p. 1
E. Jensen	pp 2-3
P. Gauthier	pp. 3-4
J. Anderson	pp. 4-5
C. Lormeus	pp. 5-6
K. Briscoe	pp. 7-9

Information:

✓ Next webinar on zoom	p. 6
✓ CNS-ON Executive list	p. 10
✓ 2 Education Awards	p. 11

CNS of the Year – 2021 – CNS-ON

Recipient: Mary-Lou Martin, RN, MScN, MEd.

Mary-Lou Martin has been a long-standing member of this organization. I have personally known her for over 30 years. She is one of the Clinical Nurse Specialists I have looked up to as a role model for CNS practice. I have also been on research teams and peer reviewed publications with her. As a CNS, she practices in mental health, does research, sits on committees in her organization, is engaged in research and dissemination, as well as professional association activities. Her research has included patient care issues such as support over the discharge process, knowledge mobilization, Tai Chi and mental health, to mention only a few areas.

She is now (Fall 2021) Past-President of the CNS Association of Canada. In this capacity, she has been advocating for recognition of CNSs by CNA and most recently sent a letter to CNA promoting the inclusion of CNS as a member category that is explicit in their new structure.

She works tirelessly to keep members of the national community informed regarding COVID-19. Over 30 newsletters have been sent so far during her term in office. She has co-hosted the *Colleague to Colleague* Zoom meetings to provide support for CNSs in Ontario and across Canada during Covid.

Mary-Lou was key in the planning and operationalization of our first national CNS conference in 2019. This was co-hosted by Ontario and the national CNS Association. It was a wonderful success and provided seed money for the next conference to be held next year.

Mary-Lou is also involved on the Planning Committee for the International Nurse Practitioner/ Advance Practice Nursing Network (INPAPN) as they prepare their conference in August. In this capacity she has represented our community and our country well.

There is much more I could add but I will stop here. Mary-Lou Martin is in my mind, an exemplary CNS who is more than worthy of this award.

Elsabeth Jensen, RN, PhD
Past-President CNS-ON

Taking on new challenges.

This is the start of a new 2-year term on the executive of the Clinical Nurse Specialist Association of Ontario. Having completed my term as President, I have taken on two new portfolios.

The areas of “research and education” are near and dear to me as I work in those realms in my day job. The next two years will allow me to focus on those areas as they relate to specialization in clinical practice. To keep up on the latest in research, I am a reviewer for several journals, and I subscribe to the indexes of many more. It is easier to track the latest evidence when it lands in my inbox.

I recommend you join **Medscape** for free updates and **Choose Wisely Canada** for the latest in Canadian best practices. McMaster University also has **ACCESSSS** which provides information on the latest peer reviewed findings for you field of practice. This site also has a repository of peer reviewed research papers related to Covid-19 and its treatment. It also has links to EBM tools. For nursing specific research, the **Joanna Briggs Institute** provides reviews of both qualitative and quantitative nursing research. You can also find tools for doing critical appraisals on this site. While there are many documents promoting best practices, it is critical to be able to critically appraise the work as not all of it is of high quality. It is also true that poor work does slip through the peer review process. It is important to carefully and critically appraise evidence before using it.

- https://www.medscape.com/features/mktg/public/register/ppc1?ecd=ppc_google_acq-brand_solo_lp2_englang-ca-int&gclid=CjwKCAjwzt6LBhBeEiwAbPGOgUboTq8U4WZliFaV6bzV2W2-tAO-PLtdrOFWFESyz6NRVzJboiYtChoCvWwQAvD_BwE
- <https://choosingwiselycanada.org/recommendations/>
- <https://www.accessss.org/>
- <https://jbi.global/>

As an elder nurse taking on social media offers new challenges. We have had a Facebook page for years and I have been a contributor for a while now. This summer, I created a short Tik Tok video for CNS week in September for the Clinical Nurse Specialist Association of Canada. This proved to be a learning curve. It took 4 tries to get something to upload but new learning curves keep the brain active. With the evolution of our website to a new platform we are discussing what other means of social media can serve the needs of CNSs. This may involve even more new learning curves for myself and other members of the executive. Stay tuned for updates.

Elsabeth Jensen, RN, BA, PhD (Nursing)
Director of Research and Education
Director of Social Media
Past President – CNS-ON

CNSs: Are we visible ?

By being involved in our own workplaces, other nurses and health care professionals may not be aware of our advanced nursing education and what we bring to the team and to the care of clients / patients / residents.

For the past 7 months, I have been contributing as a Public Health Nurse, working at the vaccination clinics in Northern Ontario. We have been busy!!! We have able to identify the gaps and the challenges that we encounter and able to address in the most efficient ways. We know how to collaborate with colleagues involved in the health care team. We know when it is time to review the literature and find articles and information most relevant to our practice, in order to offer the best evidence-based care or services.

Involved at the national level with the CNS Association of Canada.

Since Fall 2020, I have been attending with the CNS-C President the meetings in collaboration with the NACNS, the CNS Association of USA. We are having interesting discussions about the CNSs activities, roles, networking, memberships, and also a possibility include Mexican CNSs soon in our North American collaboration.

We have been in contact with members via e-mails, our Website and Facebook with regular postings. Several documents are available on the website (<http://cns-c-canada.ca>), and many links and information have been added. The outgoing President, Mary-Lou Martin, and I have worked on Newsletters during the covid period, all available to CNS-C Members. Members are enjoying these newsletters and hope to see more in the coming months on specific “nursing specialized” topics, maybe a monthly newsletter.

I have been responding to inquiries from members and other nursing associations in Ontario and in Canada. I continued to represent CNS-Canada on the Canadian Nurses’ Network (CNA) for the past few years. I was a voting delegate at the CNA AMG in June 2021. Furthermore, I have undertaken many aspects of the administrative work for our association with the CNS-C and the CNS-ON to ensure continuity and consistence.

Paul-André Gauthier
RN, CNS; TCC, DMD, MN, PhD (Nursing)
Director of Finance, CNS-ON
Clinical Nurse Specialist in
Palliative Care

CNS in practice

Clinical Nurse Specialists are Registered Nurses with advanced education and experience in a sub-specialty. Clinical Nurses Specialists (CNS) are knowledgeable about best care practices, infection prevention, control protocols, testing, and treatment protocols in addition to the unique consideration of mitigating risk and treating vulnerable populations (Diez-Sampedro, Gonzalez, Delgado, Flowers, Maltseva, & Olenick, 2020). Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, CNS have responded to the gaps in care by fulfilling roles such as COVID-19 screeners, infection prevention and control consultants, frontline nurses, educators and vaccinators – all while fulfilling their roles as clinical nurse specialists. CNS in a multitude of settings have actively addressed the gap within clinical care. Gaps that could only be fulfilled by CNS because they are Registered Nurses *first*. It is no surprise that in the spring of 2020, Advanced Practice Nursing Standards were expanded to include Advanced Practice Nurses as leaders “with a role to play in prevention and containment of disease as well as providing care” (Woods, et al., 2021, p. 1). CNS have played a key role in steering as well as participating in the development of various care processes, practices and COVID-19 related safety guidelines during the pandemic, leading to improved patient outcomes (Wood, King, Senek, Robertson, Taylor, Tod, & Ryan, 2021).

Perhaps Healthcare organizations can learn from this pandemic that Clinical Nurse Specialists are a vital set of healthcare providers that have demonstrated their clinical expertise in responding to a global health crisis (Wood, et al, 2021) and are a set of skilled nurses worth including in an inter-disciplinary team in various clinical settings.

Jennifer Anderson RN, B.Sc.N., M.Sc.N.
CPMHN(C)
Political Action ENO

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Workplace concern during the Covid 19 pandemic

As we continue to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic in Canada and globally, the staffing shortage issues continue to grow in our healthcare system. A study reported that 86% of facilities face staffing challenges in 2020 (Clarke, 2021). Long-term care facilities were among the most affected during the covid 19 pandemic compared with other healthcare facilities (Clarke, 2021). Also, unsafe workplace environments represent a concern for nurses during the pandemic and lead to negative consequences that affect their health and well-being.

Nurses as frontline workers who care for Covid 19 patients are the most affected among the other groups of medical staff (Abdollahimohammad & Firouzkouhi, 2020). This covid 19 pandemic impacted nurses physically, psychologically, and in many other ways. Risk factors may include but are not limited to working long standing hours, not getting enough breaks, inadequate staffing, burnout, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), lack of administrative support, violence in the workplace, risk of disease transmission, and death (Abdollahimohammad & Firouzkouhi, 2020; Al Sabei et al., 2020). Nurses in acute care settings are more likely to develop PTSD and burnout (Al Sabei, et al., 2020). Nurses working in the emergency department or intensive care units account for 8.5 % of cases due to the psychological stress of caring for patients with this devastating disease (Abdollahimohammad & Firouzkouhi, 2020).

Given the nature of the nursing profession, it is imperative to find better ways to mitigate the safety gaps in the workplace environment. However, appropriate measures to safely protect nurses in a vulnerable work environment do not seem to be clearly defined.

Organizational strategies are essential to address these issues to improve nurses' job satisfaction and retention. By facilitating the empowerment of nurses in the workplace and fostering inter-departmental relationships, nurses are more likely to retain their positions and thus promote better quality care for their patients. Together with the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) members, let us put

our voices collectively to advocate for a better work environment to reduce the rate of PTSD and other mental health diseases among nurses. Consequently, a nursing call to action is necessary to bring change to our healthcare system.

**Cécile Lormeus, RN, B.Sc.N.,
M.Sc.N.**
Workplace Liaison ENO

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CNS-ON Education Award 2022

Check our website: <http://cns-ontario.rnao.ca/awards>

Webinar

“ Colleague to Colleague ”

a Webinar on ZOOM

Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021 at 20:00 hr.

Register by send us an email at:

CNSOntario1@gmail.com

If you need to be in touch with us:

- ✓ CNSOntario1@gmail.com
- ✓ pgauthier@rnao.ca
- ✓ ejensen@rnao.ca

Nursing students need tailored mental health support

There are widespread concerns surrounding students' mental health across many professions due to educational changes towards remote online learning caused by the covid-19 pandemic (Gaffney et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2021; Nagy et al., 2021; Sharma & Bhaskar, 2020). The stressors associated with covid-19 have compounded pre-existing mental health challenges nursing students face such as anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation, and have consequences that will persist beyond the pandemic (Aloufi et al., 2021; Chernomas & Sahpario, 2013; Heim & Heim, 2021; Savitsky et al., 2020). Although the age groups among nursing students is diverse, a significant majority are young adults and research has previously highlighted the high incidence of mental health issues that intersects with the start of college and university education (Heim & Heim, 2021).

There are numerous interrelated factors contributing to mental health issues among students, some primary factors include concurrent responsibilities related to being a parent or caregiver, belonging to a minority or unprivileged group, limited or unstable access to reliable technology or internet, lack of transportation, financial constraints, pre-existing physical and mental health conditions (Chernomas & Shapiro, 2013; Sodeify & Moghaddam Tabrizi, 2020; Sharma & Bhaskar, 2020). Current nursing students are communicating their fears resulting from the loss of in-hospital training and deficiencies in their practical skills (Michel et al., 2021; Sodeify & Moghaddam Tabrizi, 2020). The limited clinical experience while progressing through nursing programs has been a stressor for many students who worry about their readiness for future clinical training and their entry into the profession after graduation (Michel et al., 2021; Sodeify & Moghaddam Tabrizi, 2020). These are relevant and significant concerns owing to the degree of responsibility they must assume within their own practice.

The "in person" education which traditionally consists of face-to-face lectures and training is fundamental to nursing students' building supportive relationships with peers that often lasts beyond graduation (Brooks & Moriatry, 2009; Kachaturroff et al., 2020). Additionally, mentorship and counselling from faculty and staff were significantly reduced which increases students' vulnerability. Interacting with peers and faculty in the same space provides students with a sense of belonging and connection with others, motivation, reassurance that their observations and feelings are experienced by others in their cohort, and boosts nursing students' confidence (Ghasemi et al., 2020; Henderson et al., 2020; Levett-Jones et al., 2009).

The rigor and demands of many nursing programs are a significant burden for students prior to covid-19, and the experience of obtaining education during the pandemic is disadvantageous to the development of their competence, self-efficacy, and transition into the profession. In a position statement titled, *No Shortcuts – Caring for Quality Nursing Education*, the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) which grants accreditation to nursing programs across Canada reiterates the need for students to receive the high quality training and support that is necessary to prepare them for practice and protect the public; and reducing educational standards to meet current demand for nurses is unfeasible and poses significant undue risks; and is not the solution to the chaos, discourse and struggles within the nursing profession (2021). This is welcome news from CASN on account of the

known nursing shortage, some members of the nursing profession who believe that efforts should be allocated towards pumping more nursing graduates into the system and increasing inquiry from the public and government on how to get more nurses into the workforce. Nursing students' mental health challenges must be equally addressed alongside their educational preparedness (Aloufi et al., 2021; Baloran, 2020).

The absence of tailored supports to develop nursing students' coping resiliency, self-efficacy and inattention to their mental health issues will result in educated nurses that are not equipped to manage the current demands of a nurse, some leaving the profession, and qualified nurses that are unable to work because of burnout and unmet mental health needs. The impact of mental health issues on well-being, productivity, and an individual's perception of their ability to adapt and strive after difficult challenges and uncertainty is well established. On knowing this fact, supporting nursing students' mental health now is one of the most sensible investment that will have important benefits for students, the nursing profession, and our society.

Kadeen Briscoe, RN, B.Sc.N., M.Sc.N.
Director of Communication and Secretary

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A New look....

That we are developing a new website.... That you will be able to access soon.

Clinical Nurse Specialist Association of Ontario

<http://cns-ontario.rnao.ca>

<https://www.facebook.com/Clinical-Nurse-Specialists-Association-of-Ontario-Canada-113210988761198>

CNSOntario1@gmail.com

CNS Association of Ontario 2021-2022 Executive members

President (ENO)	Rashmy Lobo
Director of Finance (ENO)	Paul-André Gauthier
Director of Policy, Practice, and Political Action (ENO)	Jennifer Anderson
Director of Communication (ENO) / Secretary	Kadeen Briscoe
Director of Research & Education (ENO)	Elsabeth Jensen
Director of Membership (ENO)	Amanda Smith
Director of Social Media (ENO)	Elsabeth Jensen
Director of Workplace Liaison (ENO)	Cécile Lormeus
Student (Master) representative	Vacant at this time.



CNS Association of Ontario Education Award 2022

Two (2) bursaries in the amount of **\$ 1,000 each** will be awarded to a member of the CNS Association of Ontario who:

- Is pursuing graduate education in nursing with a CNS stream (Master's or PhD level)
- or
- Will be attending an advanced practice nursing (CNS stream) conference in the coming year

AND

- Who is a current member of the CNS Association of Ontario (minimum one year or longer);
- Who currently resides in Ontario;
- Who has submitted their curriculum vitae (including mailing address, telephone number and email address);
- Who has enclosed one letter of reference (from a peer or academic reference);
- Who has completed a short essay (not to exceed 500 words) on:
 - ✓ your professional objectives / career goals (purpose for undertaking the program of study), and your potential contribution to advanced practice nursing as a CNS.

Deadline: Friday, January 14th, 2022 before 1500 hours (3:00pm)

Submit to:

**Clinical Nurse Specialist
Association of Ontario**

Subject: CNS-ON educational award.
CNSOntario1@gmail.com

Application Process:

Please send *your current curriculum vitae, one letter of reference (academic or professional), and a short essay of why you are deserving of this award.*

- ❖ The bursary will be **awarded** by the CNS Association of Ontario's Executive — **before the end January 2022.**
- ❖ The person will receive a refund when the Director of Finance of the CNS Association of Ontario has received an **official receipt and proof** of successful completion **prior to October 1st, 2022, preferably before that date once it is completed.**