

Welcome to the
Bi-Annual Newsletter
 Of the Palliative Care Nursing Interest
 Group (PCNIG)

Update from PCNIG Executive

Hello. We're so glad you're here!

We held our Annual General Meeting on November 26th, 2024. Members were encouraged to consider roles on the executive in the future. The executive is always looking for new ways to engage with members. Please let us know if you have any ideas for education, social media or other activities that would be meaningful by contacting us at rnao.pcnig@gmail.com.

Our Interest Group is doing well financially, we supported three scholarships, but one this year had no applicants. Members are urged to follow us on our social media (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook) for funding opportunities for scholarships, conferences and free memberships.

Conferences

Every year, PCNIG supports nurses to attend key provincial and national/international conferences. This year we supported 8 members and 2 student nurses to attend the annual conference of Hospice Palliative Care Ontario (**HPCO**) held in June, 2024 and 5 members and 2 student nurses to attend the McGill International Palliative Care Congress (**MIPCC**) held in October, 2024.

Read on for some reflections from this year's grateful beneficiaries.

COLLEEN MACDONALD (FROM MIPCC 2024)

"The best part of attending the Congress is being exposed to some of the most renowned palliative care providers in the world, hearing their stories and new approaches to palliative medicine. I feel validated in my practice, refreshed and empowered to continue to provide optimal palliative care for my patients and their loved ones."

NANCY TUKONIC (FROM MIPCC 2024)

"I attended the session: Sex and Serious Illness- Tending to Sexuality and Intimacy within the Scope of Palliative Medicine. The one thing that I will integrate into my practice is including 'sexuality/intimacy' into my initial consult assessment as presently this is not discussed nor assessed, yet our patient's illness has an impact on intimacy and may change over the illness trajectory requiring a space for further discussion."





RACHEL LAPENSEE (HPCO 2024)
"After attending [...] I will integrate a community-focused needs assessment into my practice to better address inequities in palliative care access and support. A key takeaway [...] was the importance of fostering collaboration with local organizations to create tailored palliative care solutions, as this approach can significantly reduce barriers and improve access for underserved communities in Ontario."

TINA PARASSAKIS (HPCO 2024)
"If I can sum up the highlights [...] it is that this conference provided a holistic and inter-professional approach to care by improving equity and access to palliative care services for those experiencing life-limiting illness across Canada."

KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THE CALL FOR APPLICATIONS TO ATTEND HPCO IN JUNE 2025!

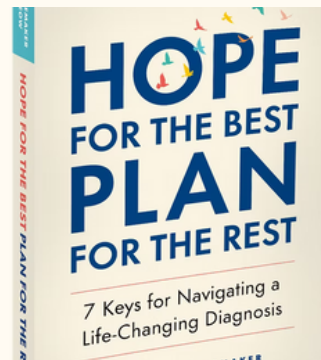
Resources



Palliative Care is Every Nurse's Business

Check out our FREE online asynchronous course to learn more about the amazing, rewarding, opportunities for nurses in palliative care. Upon completion, participants will receive a certificate of completion, and can add this to their resume!

[LINK TO COURSE](#)



"Roadmaps": Waiting Room Revolution

Hopefully, members have all read the book "Hope for the Best, Plan for the Rest" by Dr. Sammy Winemaker and Dr. Hsien Seow. They have some new Resources (Roadmaps) on their website that outline the disease trajectories for different health issues - now available are ALS, COPD and Alzheimer's but more coming soon!

[LINK TO WEBSITE](#)

Health Canada Palliative Care

Did you know that Health Canada has created a suite of resources for the public, health care providers and educators? They include information on the “Prepare or Decide” advance care planning and goals of care approach. Also, they have some wonderful videos focusing on the palliative approach to care. You need to check this out!



[LINK TO WEBSITE](#)

From the front lines:

Nursing Student Members Perspectives

CHRISTINA OLEJNIKOV (STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE)



“ I am a 4th year student at Western University and just completed my consolidation placement at Southlake Hospital, in the Oncology and Palliative care units. This placement was very rewarding as I got to experience palliative care in practice for the first time as a student. While I learned a lot on these units, my main takeaway was the shift between curing and caring. During my previous placements, the role of the healthcare team was to heal ailments, even through methods that patients were not always fond of. In the palliative care unit, however, staff are more concerned with issues of pain and quality of life, focusing on patients’ wishes and making every day a comfortable and positive one. This is my favourite part of nursing, making people happy and the healthcare experience as pleasant as possible. No matter where I will work after graduation, I will remember the values of comfort and care that palliative care highlights.”

Christina presenting her research poster at the Hospice Palliative Care Ontario annual conference in 2024.



Left to right: Jen, Christina and Ana at the 2024 RNAO Annual General Meeting, after the main event where members voted on resolutions.



ANA CONSTANTIN (STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE)



Ana and her colleagues from University of Toronto at North York General Hospital 3 West on her last day of placement.

"Being in my last year of the second-entry BScN program at University of Toronto, I was fortunate enough to be placed in the Oncology and Palliative care unit at North York General Hospital for 12 weeks. My biggest takeaways were to be present, and hold space for suffering. I discovered I could be more realistic in my goals, too - I may not always be in a position to help the patients and their families make meaning out of suffering. This was also the most challenging aspect, since I felt "powerless" at times. I will always remember the compassion of nurses on that unit, and remind myself to engage in self-care activities outside of work to prevent compassion fatigue."

On 3 west, purple butterfly cutouts are used when a patient is actively dying and/or has died, to be placed outside the patient door.



JEN ENGLISH (STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE)

"I am a 3rd year student of the RPN bridging to BScN program at Conestoga/McMaster. I have recently completed my consolidation placement at Stedman Community Hospice in Brantford. While I have experience in palliative care as an RPN in the hospital setting, my time at Stedman Hospice has truly shown me how the dedication to quality end of life care, abundant in compassion and a genuine love for caring for our community has such an immense impact on not just the patient, but their family as well. The staff were truly inspiring. When a person is ready to be taken to the funeral home, the staff do a walk out with the family with a song of their choosing. This ceremony was both very difficult and lovely to be part of. While my heart hurt for the family, it was beautiful to see all the love that surrounded the patient and knowing that they had been comfortable in their last hours on earth. I take away from this experience the reminder that our patients and their families are real people. As nurses, we must not forget the human aspect of caring, it is not only the clinical interventions that we provide that matter."



Canadian Palliative Care Nursing Association

CPCNA's 2025 Membership Drive - Join now for free! Those who join before January 31, 2025 will have their name submitted for a chance to win a FREE 2026 Membership (to be drawn at the 2025 AGM).

[CPCNA WEBSITE](#)

Some membership benefits:

- remain current on what is happening in palliative care in Canada, build national connections
- register FREE for select CPCNA education webinars
- enjoy members-only website access and access to events
- participate in activities through the Palliative Care and Nursing Ethics Hub at UOttawa

Message from your President

It is hard to believe another year has come and gone already! Some of us may be happy to wave goodbye to 2024 and some of us may do so knowing we are leaving some people and precious memories behind. However you choose to celebrate the coming of a new year, remember to take the time needed to reflect and honour those you have supported throughout the year. Please also take some time to reflect upon the differences you have made in so many people's lives through your care. Even if you may feel like you haven't made a difference, I want to ensure you that you have. I also would like to extend, on behalf of the board and myself, how privileged we have felt to serve you all for another year. This year for the first time in a very long time we have a full board and I am so honoured to be a part of this magnificent group of nurses and nursing students.



We have endeavoured to re-invest in our members this year and look forward to finding ways to continue to elevate the voices of palliative care nurses and nursing students. This year we have sent numerous members to various palliative care conferences, continued to give awards through RNFOO, and hosted webinars from leaders sharing their expertise in palliative care with you.

On behalf of the RAO PCNIG board we want to wish you all a very safe and happy holiday season and look forward to continuing to connect and grow into the coming year.

Kindly,

Mahoganie Hines BScN, RN, MHSc, CHPCN(C)

Join us today!

Visit our website and social media platforms to stay connected on our upcoming events.

[WEBSITE LINK](#)

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