



RAINBOW
NURSING
INTEREST
GROUP

Newsletter

May-June 2025

Greetings from your Executive!



You may contact us through our **website**: <https://chapters-igs.rnao.ca/interestgroup/58/about>

Please note: if you "**login**" to "**MyRNAO**", you will have access to way more information about us – as a member of RNIG.

Follow us on **Facebook**: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/RainbowNursing/>

and contact the President directly: rnao.rainbow@gmail.com or Rainbow-RNIG@hotmail.com



Our Mission:

- To foster and advocate for nursing practice and environments that support people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions.

Message from, RNIG President Active and Alive!

Dear RNIG members,

Some of you will be heading to Toronto this week for RNAO's **100th** Annual General Meeting. For those who haven't yet attended an AGM, it's where member "Consultation Reps" vote on resolutions for the coming year. It's an exciting time to learn about RNAO priorities, and to see fellow nurses from across Ontario who we only see a few times a year.

We are also creating a time capsule with items from current members, to be opened in the future.

The Association can only survive and thrive with the efforts of the membership of RNs, NPs, and nursing students.


Thank you for your work to promote excellence in Nursing. 100 years of RNAO is a great accomplishment! There is a place for you here.

Sarah van den Enden Thornley, (she/her)
President RNIG

RNIG AGM

Saturday, August 16, 2025
at 10:00 AM
zoom





➤ Paul-André Gauthier, Membership ENO and Social Media (he/ him)

Follow up from the previous article – March 2025 on pages 11-12
[Microsoft Word - RNIG-Newsletter_March 2025-ok-2.docx](#)

A Comparison: Affirming High School vs University Experience for 2SLGBTQ+ Students

The main differences between the two systems stem from the target audience — [high school students](#) versus [university students](#) — and how affirming care is framed within each educational setting.

Here are the key distinctions:

1. Tone and Approach

- **High School System:** Uses a more conversational and supportive tone, making it relatable for younger students. It emphasizes belonging, safety, and respect in a way that feels personal and reassuring.
- **University System:** Maintains a supportive tone but is more structured and academic, aligning with the maturity and independence of university students. It discusses systemic change and professional preparedness.

2. Focus on Institutional vs. Personal Growth

- **High School System:** Focuses on the student experience within the school environment—having supportive teachers, access to safe spaces, and resources for personal well-being. The emphasis is on immediate, daily experiences.
- **University System:** Broadens the focus to include institutional responsibility—curriculum changes, healthcare access, and research. It connects affirming care to professional development and societal impact.

3. Discussion of Healthcare and Mental Health Support

- **High School System:** Mentions mental health support in a general way, highlighting the importance of counselors and safe spaces.
- **University System:** Expands on the need for inclusive healthcare, including gender-affirming care, hormone therapy referrals, and specialized mental health services. This reflects the greater autonomy university students have in managing their healthcare.

4. Role of Advocacy and Systemic Change

- **High School System:** Focuses on respect, inclusion, and creating a supportive peer culture. It encourages students to take small actions, like standing up against bullying or forming GSAs.

- **University System:** Introduces a broader perspective on advocacy, discussing research, institutional policies, and long-term change. It encourages students to engage in activism and contribute to inclusive leadership.

5. Representation in Education

- **High School System:** Talks about seeing oneself reflected in lessons—learning about 2SLGBTQI+ figures, diverse stories, and inclusive health education.
- **University System:** Goes deeper, discussing the integration of 2SLGBTQI+ topics into professional studies, research, and academia, ensuring that future professionals are well-equipped to support diverse communities.

Conclusion

Both School systems emphasize the importance of affirming care, but the high school system is centered on immediate safety, peer support, and fostering a sense of belonging, while the university system takes a more systemic approach, highlighting institutional responsibility, professional preparation, and long-term advocacy.

Disclaimer: This article was created with the assistance of ChatGPT, using specific information and guidelines. The author contributed additional content to ensure its relevance to the members, with efforts made to ensure accuracy and coherence.



Sharing Stories of Positive 2SLGBTQI+ Stories in Healthcare

STORY 1

“Are you the doctor?” “Can I consult you on this patient?” “What’s your opinion on this diagnosis?”

I roll my eyes in insult.

“I’m just the Nurse,” I chime back. Sometimes, if I’m in a good mood, I’ll respond back in a more positive and affirmative tone, “I’m the Nurse,” or “I’m your Nurse.” But these days, I’m just the nurse.

And yet it never fails, “Excuse me, Doctor.” I turn around and... you’re standing in front of me; there’s no one else around. You’re clearly talking to me. This has been occurring since I was 18 and started working in hospital. I walk into a room or nursing station and BAM! Everyone assumes I’m the doctor, without fail. As if that’s something I wanted to be. It always bothered me, but at 18 through my early 20’s, it really just made me angry. Like, here’s another way for society to pigeon hole me again as the cinematic token gay male, working in nursing. I was one of 10 males in my nursing class. 10. Half of them didn’t make it to graduation. But I’m just a Nurse.

“If I was a woman, would you still have assumed I was the doctor?” I roll my eyes again.

Along with assuming that I'm the doctor, I get comments on my physical appearance. Which is great, If I needed or wanted it. Like when you save a life. Like actually bring back someone from their deathbed, and what are their first words as they stare up at you, as if you were God themselves and say... "You should have been a model." You've got to be kidding me. Such a sweet compliment.

"Why are you here, you could be making so much money, traveling the world with your looks." "Have you ever modelled?" "Were you a dancer in a past Life?" "Do you work out?" As if I didn't just help bring them back to life. But I'm just a male Nurse.

"Excuse me, Doctor." Crap, back to reality.

I turn around, "I'm just the Nurse." ... to be yelled at because your husband hasn't gone to CT yet. As I walk out of room where a woman just died. Right next to this one. As if you couldn't hear the code alarms or see the surge of people run to one room to help someone in need. Just the Nurse.

Sometimes I feel like I'm just going back and forth between revolving doors of anxiety and depression. Like the ghost alarms of codes and IV pumps that I hear in my head when I try to put my head down to sleep. Sometimes I feel herded like cattle through a system that under appreciates the true value and integrity of its workforce. And I love what I do. So I keep coming back. The Nurse.

See, the thing is, I know what I am. I am surer of what I am than most people will ever be in their lives.

I'm the Nurse who cares for the communities the rest of us try to ignore.

I'm the Nurse who helped you find breath when air escaped you.

I'm the Nurse who saved you from the Doctor that was still learning.

I'm the Nurse who made sure your family was cared for when they were informed of your sudden passing.

I'm the Nurse you want in an emergency.

I'm the Nurse who stopped your heart, and brought it back.

I'm the Nurse that reminded you, humans are good, after you'd been traumatized.

I'm the Nurse that sits with you, as your world falls apart, and then helps you learn how to put it back together.

I'm the Nurse.

"Excuse me Doctor, WHEN AM I GOING HOME!"



Sharing Stories of Positive 2SLGBTQI+ Stories in Healthcare

STORY 2

During my formative years, I encountered instances of harassment that persisted from childhood through adolescence and into higher education. In the milieu of my small-town upbringing, the diversity of my classmates did not preclude the presence of harassment. However, as I progressed into advanced science classes in high school, the prevalence and severity of harassment diminished, owing largely to the heightened emphasis on academic competition amongst the predominantly male cohort.

This competitive ethos persisted into my collegiate pursuits, particularly within the rigorous confines of the health sciences program. Here, the imperative for academic excellence among my male peers often manifested as a relentless pursuit of distinction, occasionally driving some individuals to resort to unethical practices such as cheating when faced with perceived academic inadequacy.

In stark contrast, my personal approach to academic endeavor was characterized by a steadfast commitment to scholarly integrity and the pursuit of excellence through diligent study and intellectual engagement. I derived immense satisfaction from the intellectual challenge inherent in maintaining a competitive standing within the upper echelons of my academic cohort, consistently striving to rank among the top performers in my class.

Upon entering university, the harassment I experienced abated, and the initial significance of my sexual orientation diminished. As a nurse and a man in nursing, navigating the healthcare profession, I perceived a notable disparity in acceptance compared to the present landscape, especially considering the attitudes prevalent decades ago. Despite encountering challenges rooted in societal stereotypes and discrimination, I steadfastly pursued a commitment to delivering high-quality care, driven by an intrinsic motivation to excel rather than seeking external validation.

Over the years, my focus remained on providing optimal care, independent of external expectations or perceptions. While I observed a gradual shift in the attitudes of colleagues towards my work ethic and dedication, it wasn't until a nursing colleague directly expressed resentment, citing a comparison between our respective contributions, that I became acutely aware of the dynamics at play. The comment, "you make us look bad," underscored the discomfort some colleagues harbored in the face of my diligence and productivity, highlighting the contrast between our approaches to professional practice. In response, I remained resolute in my commitment to fulfilling my professional responsibilities to the best of my ability, cognizant of the broader societal biases that continue to influence perceptions within the healthcare domain. My journey as a man in nursing has been defined by a steadfast dedication to excellence, tempered by an unwavering resolve to challenge stereotypes and advocate for inclusivity within the healthcare profession.

Throughout numerous years contending with instances of harassment rooted in my sexual orientation, I have cultivated resilience both in my professional endeavors and personal life. I have forged meaningful connections and networks within various communities, engaging in collaborative projects and initiatives aligned with my deeply held convictions. As I transition into new positions, I

find myself afforded the flexibility to select contracts that align with my continued involvement in nursing and healthcare, enabling me to remain productive and engaged.

Central to the expectations of individuals within the 2SLGBTQ+ community is the fundamental principle of respect and the freedom from harassment. Moreover, they seek the assurance of rights and opportunities commensurate with those enjoyed by others within society. As a member of this diverse community, I am committed to advocating for inclusivity and equity, striving to foster environments where all individuals are empowered to thrive and contribute meaningfully to the fabric of society.

Over the course of my journey as a gay individual, I have honed a keen awareness, enabling me to discern instances of subtle harassment and discrimination—a skill borne not of paranoia, but of lived experience. I have cultivated the ability to navigate such situations adeptly, opting to either confront them with polite assertiveness or disengage when confrontation proves fruitless. Recognizing the toxicity inherent in certain individuals and environments, I prioritize my well-being by consciously avoiding such negativity.

Active involvement in advocating for the 2SLGBTQ+ community entails more than personal resilience; it necessitates a commitment to supporting essential programs and services tailored to our community's specific needs. By championing these initiatives, we not only acknowledge the progress made by those who came before us but also contribute to the ongoing evolution of our collective well-being. Gratitude for the groundwork laid by our predecessors serves as a reminder of the strides we have made and underscores the importance of building upon these foundations rather than starting anew with each generation.

In the last five years, our society has observed a concerning trend characterized by an apparent regression in attitudes toward the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Manifestations of prejudice and bias have become increasingly overt, with discrimination experiencing a troubling resurgence. The erosion of respect for fellow human beings is a perplexing phenomenon, one that defies easy explanation and underscores the imperative for concerted action.

In light of these developments, the role of genuine allies has never been more crucial. True allies are called upon to lend their voices in advocacy and to actively engage in initiatives aimed at fostering a climate of acceptance and inclusion. By standing in solidarity with the 2SLGBTQ+ community, allies contribute to the cultivation of a positive and affirming environment wherein all individuals can thrive and flourish.

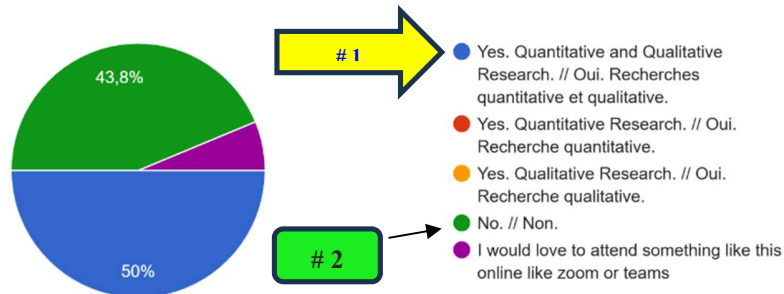
In these uncertain times, prioritizing personal safety and well-being remains paramount. Let us remain vigilant, supporting one another as we navigate the complexities of an evolving social landscape. Together, we can strive to build a future characterized by equality, understanding, and mutual respect.



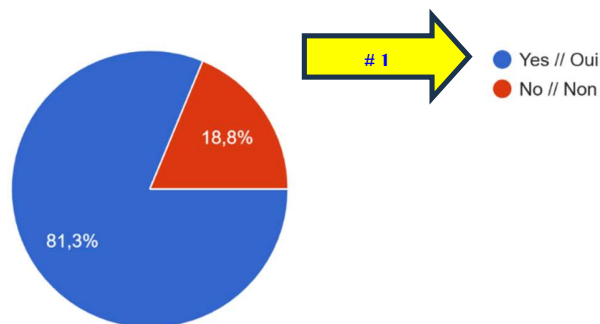
RNIG -Rainbow - Survey results.

Survey # 1 Rainbow Results December 2024

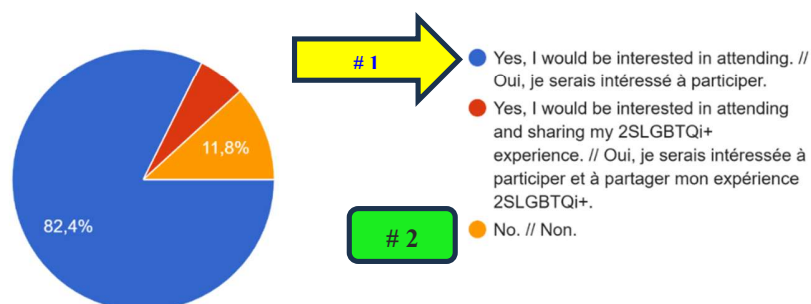
Would you be interested in attending workshops on how to read / interpret research articles? Seriez-vous intéressée à participer à des ...çon de lire/ interpréter des articles de recherche?
16 réponses



Would you be interested in attending workshops for publications and implementing research in clinical practice? Seriez-vous intéressée à assis...à mettre en œuvre la recherche en pratique clinique?
16 réponses

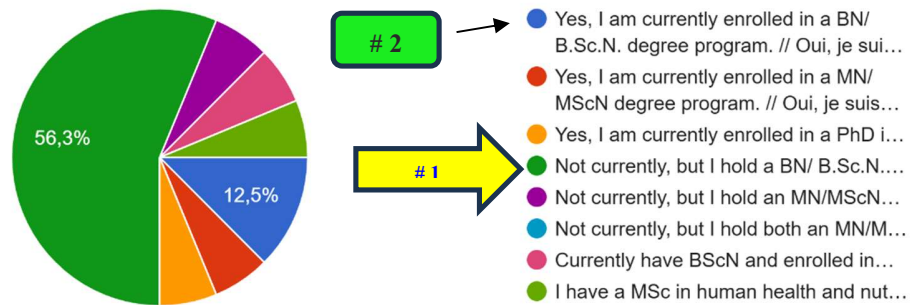


Would you be interested in attending a series of career panels featuring RNIG members? Seriez-vous intéressée à assister ...nt en vedette des membres de notre association ?
17 réponses



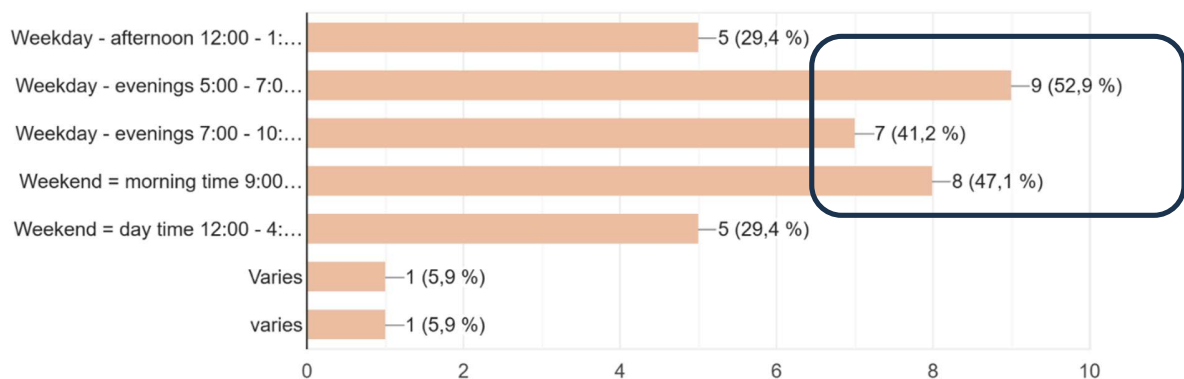
Are you currently enrolled as a student in a B.Sc.N., Master's of Nursing or PhD in nursing program ? Êtes-vous actuellement inscrite comme étudiante...mières ou à un doctorat en sciences infirmières?

16 réponses



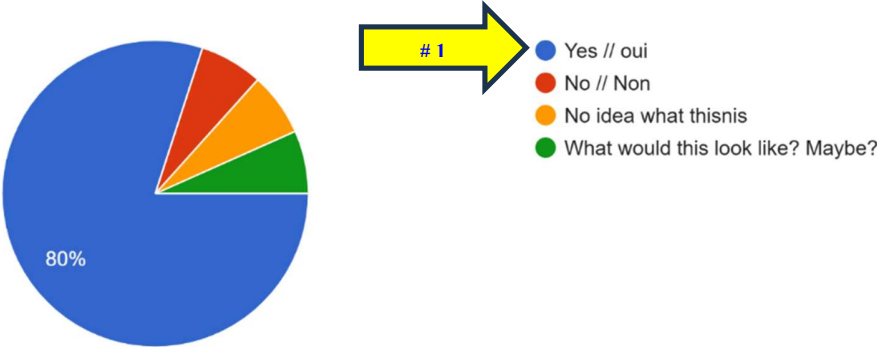
What day and time are better for you to attend education sessions ? Quels jours et à quels temps vous préférez assister à des sessions de formation ?

17 réponses



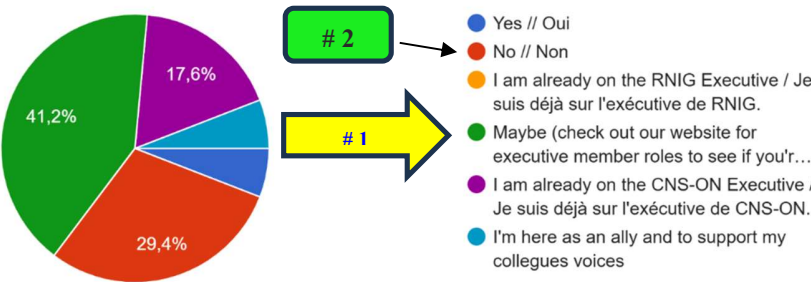
Would you be interested in "Colleague to Colleague" sharing meetings? Seriez-vous intéressé à des rencontres entre collègues de partage ?

15 réponses



Would you be interested in joining the RNIG executive committee beginning next Summer in 2025? Seriez-vous intéressée à vous joindre au comité exécutif de RNIG l'an prochain en 2025 ?

17 réponses



RNIG Rainbow Survey # 2 Rainbow Results

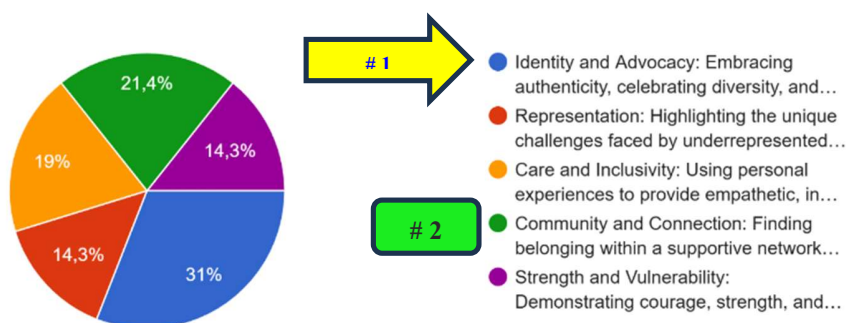
February 2025

What are your main reason for joining the RNIG ? from the summary received: Quelle est votre principale raison de rejoindre le RNIG ?

43 réponses



Here from the summary of what you said about what it means for you to be 2SLGBTQ+ member - Which one is most important ? Voici le résumé de ...e 2SLGBTQ+ - Qu'est-ce qui est le plus important ?
42 réponses



What educational topics would you be interested in learning more about? (Format would be virtual webinars by Zoom): Sur quels sujets éducatifs souh...format serait des webinaires virtuels par Zoom) :
43 réponses

