

From the Editor-in-Chief

This issue is different in several ways from others published this year. First, we are putting the spotlight on patient safety in recognition of the establishment of the Canadian Patient Safety Institute. The Institute will provide leadership and coordination in building a culture of patient safety and quality improvement throughout the system.

Second, we have a special editorial from Wendy Nicklin, the Vice President, Nursing, Allied Health, Clinical Programs and Patient Safety at The Ottawa Hospital, who introduces the topic of patient safety (page 66). Having written in this journal last year on nurses' perceptions of patient safety, Nicklin has considerable expertise to share on the topic. Her editorial is followed by a paper by Dyanne Affonso and colleagues (pg. 69) proposing a framework for patient safety that incorporates the findings from the Nicklin and McVeety study (2002). This, in turn, is followed by the report of a study by Angela Henderson (page 82) on nurses' experience of abuse in the workplace. It raises the question of the consequences for patient safety when nurses' safety is at risk.

Our four columns raise an interesting set of issues. Alba DiCenso (page 20) challenges educators to base their teaching on research evidence in order to establish, indelibly, in students – and hence, in future nurses – a pattern of turning to research to guide their practice. Esther Green (page 27) encourages nurses to seize the opportunity for creating new roles within the current system through increasingly specialized practice. Mary Ellen Jeans (page 31) provokes us to consider merging all the professional organizations that represent registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and registered psychiatric nurses, and other organizations such as the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing, into one organization that would speak with a single voice about and for nursing in order to command the attention of policy makers. Marianne Lamb (page 34) proposes that schools of nursing and clinical agencies that provide practice sites for students must renegotiate their relationships and become partners in the education enterprise.

The issue also provides a brief but revealing profile of a contemporary nursing leader, Mary Ferguson-Paré, the Vice President of Nursing at the University Health Network in Toronto (page 37). We are also pleased to have a historic analysis by Sonya Grypma (page 39) of one facet of an early nurse leader, Ethel Johns.

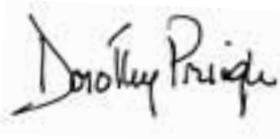
One comes away from reading both accounts with admiration for these women's courage, judgment and willingness to challenge the accepted ways of doing things.

Dianne McCormack (page 48) suggests that the concept of self-care has more to offer than is immediately obvious or has been previously discussed. Souraya Sidani (page 63) pushes the argument even further in her commentary outlining what will have to change in nursing practice for self-care to be truly effective. Finally, we have the results of a study by Caroline Collette and colleagues (page 99) that tackled the difficult and frequently avoided topic of how to get nurses to take on the challenge of managing urinary incontinence in long-term care. They show how it can be done.

This issue should provide lots of thoughtful and thought-provoking reading over the holidays and in the new year. From ACEN and Longwoods, a wish for a happy, productive and rewarding 2004.

Reference

Nicklin, W. and J.E. McVeety. 2002. "Canadian Nurses Describe Their Perceptions of Patient Safety in Teaching Hospitals: Wake Up Call!" *Canadian Journal of Nursing Leadership* 15(3): 11-21.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dorothy Pringle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dorothy Pringle, PhD
Editor-in-Chief