

From the Editor-in-Chief

Transitions

It's that time of year when the seasons are transitioning, from summer to fall, from fall to winter. And how true are grandmother's claims that with advancing age, the days and months seemingly pass by faster and faster. Nonetheless, spring and summer still seem eternally far off at the moment. While the passage of time imparts new personal and professional experiences, new people, roles and learning serve to keep us interesting, alive and engaged in the world. Yet these occurrences of change in one's life are often fraught with struggles and challenges to be overcome; not the least of which are those associated with role transitions throughout the course of a career.

Being a nurse offers a bounty of career path options and opportunities for lifelong learning either formally or informally. Let's face it, for anyone who has longevity in this business, you have likely changed jobs several times, gone back to school at least once and most certainly been someone's pain in the behind as the new kid on the block. Of course the experience of being a novice may happen repeatedly with transitions to new practice settings and/or the assumption of new roles. When the end of a career is in sight and the only decision left is when to pull the plug, the transition to retirement is much easier for some than others.

Completing an undergraduate or graduate degree at the outset or later in one's career can be equally difficult but likely for very different reasons. Balancing the need for academic discipline with the liberties of university life can be taxing for those with limited life experience and maturity – not to mention a penchant for a good time (trust me, I know). Alternatively, the mature, seasoned student has survived in the real world and often brings a pragmatic cynicism to the classroom. Not necessarily a bad thing mind you, but may at times expose a vulnerable educator. While succeeding in academic pursuits rewards one with new knowledge and skills, it may not ready the candidate for their next transition, be it to the working world or a new career focus. As leaders it is incumbent on us to recognize that like the experience of any change, transitions need to be supported and afforded every opportunity to be achieved successfully.

In this issue, Adamack and Rush present the findings of their study on new graduate nurse transitions. Findings of disparities between the expectations and realities experienced by new graduates and their employers underscore the need for greater collaboration and alignment between nursing education and practice. In the Emerging Leader column, Liu reflects upon the tensions associated with being a young, master's-prepared nurse. As she indicates anecdotally, the recent new graduate with little to no practice experience is becoming increasingly commonplace, if not the dominant student demographic, in graduate nursing programs. In truth, my colleagues and I have found this to be the case. Needless to say, this shift is necessitating a different transition for educators – discovering how to ensure meaningful and contextualized teaching and learning for the graduate student with limited experience. Liu again highlights the need to advance the discussion between education and practice, but specifically as it relates to graduate-prepared nurse transitions.

Retaining the expertise of late career nurses poses a different kind of challenge to healthcare organizations. Jeffs and colleagues describe the results of a study of nurse leaders' perceptions of the Late Career Nurse Initiative in Ontario. They identify the importance of have a strategic approach, leveraging staff expertise, securing organizational support and, of course, leadership to effectively enable strategies to retain older nurses. This work emphasizes the need to identify and develop new career paths for an aging workforce.

On another note, this journal has also a recent transition within our editorial team. My personal thanks to Dr. Greta Cummings for her commitment of time and expertise, in reviewing and writing for the journal over the past five years. The rigour of

her research lens and specific expertise in leadership has been invaluable. Thank you Greta! At the same time, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Dr. Carol Wong for agreeing to join the team. From the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing, Western University, she has been a member of the CJNL Editorial Advisory Board for several years. She brings her research expertise and scholarship in the area of nursing leadership to the team. Welcome Carol!

Overall, transitions bring fresh perspectives, infuse opportunities to do something different from our predecessors and, for the most part, broaden our thinking and views of nursing and life. Quite frankly, without transitions the world would be boring. BTW, time to get out the winter coat!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynn', with a stylized, cursive flourish.

Lynn M. Nagle, RN, PhD
Editor-in-Chief