

The Spirit and Strength of Nursing Leadership

Before writing my editorial for each issue, I think carefully about what I want to say to the readership of the *Canadian Journal of Nursing Leadership*. For me, this involves reflecting on the evolving challenges of our health and social systems here in Canada and around the globe. The “troubled times” I wrote about a few years ago (Martin-Misener 2022) continue and have deepened and widened with layers of economic, social and political complexity and uncertainty that were unimaginable then. Global and national conflicts and uncertainties, along with fiscal constraints, are impacting everyone and leading to a pervasive widening in social inequities.

Nursing as a discipline and profession must continue to find the grit and determination to dig deep and push ourselves individually and collectively to not only persevere but also lead with innovation and integrity. When I look around me, what impresses me most is the response of nurses and nurse practitioners. How we show up in the world matters. What we do and say to our patients and to each other matters. Although there are many things that we cannot change, how we show up is not one of them. That is ours to own.

The articles in this issue are an inspiration and testimony to the spirit and strength of nursing leadership and ingenuity that stand firm with courage and determination. What these articles tell us is that nurses are saying yes to action, embracing change and finding and proactively testing promising solutions. Some might challenge me and say I am seeing the world through rose-coloured glasses. Maybe, but I do not think so. There are many stories of courage in dark times in nursing’s past from which we can draw strength and inspiration.

In This Issue

The issue begins with an opening commentary by Canadian Nurses Association's Chief Executive Officer, Valerie Grdisa, who offers a spirited reflection on the challenges and difficulties facing our country and the nursing profession. Grdisa (2026) exposes the layers of complexity in these issues, along with nursing's response, with examples of innovative work being done nationally and by nurses across the country.

Support for Internationally Educated Nurses

Next in this issue is our continuing focus on internationally educated nurses (IENs), which has three articles. The first is authored by nursing and health system leaders in Nova Scotia and focuses on the implementation of new pathways to support IENs (Elliott Rose et al. 2026). The authors offer insights into the strategies and structures that support integration into care teams and communities and presents the experiential perspectives of nursing and health system leaders directly involved in the implementation of these new pathways. Drawing on their experience, they insightfully discuss six lessons learned.

The second article is written by Myllyaho and Raynak (2026), who describe an innovation to facilitate the transition and integration of IENs into acute care settings in northern Ontario. The authors describe the implementation of a coordinator role to support integration of IENs as well as early outcomes associated with onboarding supports, communication and workforce integration.

This section concludes with a book review by Cruz (2026), who offers a thoughtful summary and reflection on a new book about IENs entitled *Globalization and Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses: A Comprehensive Analysis*. Cruz (2026) challenges us to learn from the experiences of other countries and identify transferable strategies for integration, including the important role of educators in teaching nursing students how to cultivate diverse and inclusive environments.

Nurse Leadership and Artificial Intelligence

Next in this issue is a leadership perspective from Nagle and colleagues (2026), who write about artificial intelligence (AI). The authors wisely describe AI as being an “invisible change agent,” encouraging nursing leaders to embrace AI as a leadership competency and governance issue. Nagle et al. (2026) challenge leaders to step up and lead a path forward to its purposeful adoption and integration. This article was particularly compelling for me to read given my own self-confessed (and embarrassed) status as a late and nervous adopter. Nagle et al.'s (2026) challenge to embrace AI from the driver's seat is compelling.

Nursing Research

This issue's research section has three articles. In the first of these, Curry et al. (2026) outline the process used in the collaborative efforts of the Community Health Nurses of Canada and SE Health to revise the 2010 Home Health Nursing Competencies. Initiated in spring 2023, their collaborative effort used two work-streams (research and project) to carry out the work. Their article identifies how shared goals and collaboration enabled the revision of the competencies.

Next, Marcellus and O'Connor (2026) report the results of a mixed-methods study that explored the impact of a perioperative learning pathway in their university's baccalaureate program. To address this question, the authors conducted a mixed-methods study of the recruitment and long-term retention of nurses who completed a perioperative learning pathway during the final year of their Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

In the third research study in this issue, Miller and Topola (2026) report on a survey of 2,500 registered nurses (RNs) in one province and one territory. Its purpose was to answer research questions about RNs' perceptions of the current brand of nursing, what the brand should be and the disconnections between the current and preferred brand. Their results reveal a level of confusion and uncertainty with current branding and a desire for brand clarity that captures nurses' leadership, knowledge, caring and contributions.

I hope you enjoy this issue. As always, we welcome your feedback on the journal and articles within it.

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