

College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of British Columbia

Annual Report from the Chair, Board of Directors

May 2008

2007/2008 has seen incredible activity for the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of British Columbia. I would just like to take a few minutes in this report to reflect on several of the key initiatives in which the College has been involved or will be involved in the next number of upcoming months.

The CRPNBC has had a continued emphasis and focus on the pursuit of new opportunities and challenges that best position the organization, individual Registered Psychiatric Nurses and the profession of psychiatric nursing to meet the evolving challenges in an ever-changing, dynamic health care environment... As a regulatory body governing Registered Psychiatric Nurses in British Columbia, the CRPNBC continues to be accountable for the protection of the public through provision of excellence in mental health/psychiatric nursing for the patient/client populations entrusted to our care.

Legislative revisions to the bylaws and regulations that govern the practice of psychiatric nursing are under review. The review will position the CRPNBC and Registered Psychiatric Nurses to address the changing scope of practice and to expand traditional roles and responsibilities within legislation consistent with the enhanced scope of practice.

A preliminary review of the scope of practice and regulations governing the practice of Registered Psychiatric Nurses has begun.

CRPNBC will also be participating with the three (3) other regulatory bodies for Registered Psychiatric Nurses to develop and implement an action plan for the Registered Psychiatric Nurse-Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Role.

2008 will mark a memorable and unparalleled year in the history of changes that will occur in the professional staffing complements of the CRPNBC. The Board of Directors was made aware in the latter part of 2007 of the intended retirement of Mary MacInnes from the position of Deputy Registrar/Practice Consultant. This resulted in the Human Resource Committee posting the position and the successful recruitment into the position of Linda Syssoff. Linda commenced employment with the CRPNBC in her new role on April 1, 2008. In March 2008 the Board of Directors was advised that Donna Higenbottam, Executive Director/Registrar was also going to retire later in 2008. The Human Resource Committee was again put into action and is currently actively recruiting for Donna's position, both internally within the province of British Columbia as well as externally. These changes will herald the end of an era and the beginning of another chapter in the history of the CRPNBC. We go into these changes with a strong and united organization and a strong and forward thinking Board of Directors.

The CRPNBC continues to advance and to advocate for key leadership roles in the areas of administration, education, clinical practice and research. We continue to expand our horizons and our networks, not only at the provincial and national levels but also at the international level. We continue to engage with provincial and federal governments, with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, with the Office of Nursing Policy in Ottawa, with international nursing organizations and with the Canadian Institute on Patient Safety in matters affecting the profession of psychiatric nursing, mental health service delivery, patient/client and staff safety, families and Registered Psychiatric Nurses.

Educational programs that are available to Registered Psychiatric Nurses continue to expand and diversify to meet the competing demands of the workforce and for mental health service delivery. For the first time in 2007, a milestone was set with the graduation of the first baccalaureate degree graduates in psychiatric nursing in British Columbia from the Kwantlen University College Program. Kwantlen has just recently received full status as a university. Douglas College also offers a bachelors degree in psychiatric nursing. This is the first time in the educational history of Registered Psychiatric Nurses in British Columbia that there is not one, but two options to pursue degrees in the field of psychiatric nursing. There are some who would never have believed that this could be realized. There are those of us who believed it would become a reality.

There is much to celebrate. Mental Health Week, Nurses Week, the World Congress for Psychiatric Nurses and the European Festival of Psychiatric Nursing, are but a few of the upcoming provincial, national and international celebrations that honour consumers of mental health services, the profession of psychiatric nursing, Registered Psychiatric Nurses and the areas of practice where RPNs are employed. The Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Canada Awards of Excellence will honour four (4) Registered Psychiatric Nurses from across Canada at the World Congress in May. The CRPNBC Awards of Excellence will be bestowed on nominated Registered Psychiatric Nurses on June 12, 2008 at the Annual General Meeting and Awards Luncheon.

2008 also marks a particularly special celebration for Registered Psychiatric Nurses, Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses as British Columbia recognizes 150 outstanding nurses for significant contributions to patient care and to health care in the areas of nursing practice, education, research and administration. The 2008 BC Outstanding Nurses 2008 Recognition Awards are sponsored by the British Columbia Ministry of Health, Nursing Directorate. Award recipients will be announced during Nursing Week by Paula Bond, Assistant Deputy Minister of Patient Safety, Clinical Innovation and Chief Nurse Executive, Ministry of Health.

The opportunities to share knowledge, transfer and exchange knowledge, build integral nursing networks, to meet and discuss best practices, evidence-based practices and to integrate administration, education, clinical practice and research appear limitless in the global age in which we work and live. I look forward to continuing to serve as the Chair of the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses of British Columbia and to working with psychiatric nursing colleagues in Canada and other parts of the international nursing community. It is some of the most exciting times for the CRPNBC and for Registered Psychiatric Nurses with the only boundaries being those that we might self-impose.

In conclusion of this report, I would like to take the opportunity to publicly acknowledge, thank and commend the Board of Directors and the CRPNBC Executive Director/Registrar and her professional and administrative support staff for their tireless leadership and for their continued commitment and dedication in supporting the many initiatives that have been undertaken. It is these people who are the critical components to ensure that the mandate of the CRPNBC in the protection of the public is upheld and that there is accountability back to the public for the mental health services and programs with which we are entrusted.

Respectfully Submitted
Dorothy Jennings
Chair, CRPNBC Board of Directors