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EDITOR'S NOTE KIMBERLEY KEARSEY

## Heroes in our midst

I'VE ONLY FOUND MYSELF IN ONE emergency situation where I truly felt the life of another individual was in my hands. In that instance, I actually surprised myself at how focused I was. Adrenaline was my drug, but I think natural instinct also took over.

Most people have the capacity to act when called upon, but a little bravery does not an RN make. The nurses you will meet in this issue demonstrate courage every day. For that, we can all be envious, and truly grateful.

Our feature about first responders (pg. 18) details how five Ontario nurses were called upon to provide care in unexpected situations. They were away from a hospital. They did not have the security of equipment and resources within arm's reach. They only had their instincts and knowledge to guide them. Most people can only hope to handle themselves well when faced with uncertainty and stress. These nurses did.

Our cover feature (pg 12) explores another kind of emergency: outbreaks of infectious disease in the hospital setting. We talk to nurses about the challenges of infection control, the stress that protocols can sometimes place on their ability to care for patients, and the help they need from colleagues – and the public – to ensure patient safety.

Emergencies are frightening situations that demand focus. They may happen inside or outside our health-care system. Regardless of the circumstance, it's reassuring to know there could be an RN right around the corner to help us through those moments of uncertainty.

None of the nurses we feature in this issue would describe themselves as 'heroes.' But I will. And I'll follow that up with heartfelt thanks. Here's wishing all of you an emergency free holiday season. **RN**

### Are you traditional or digital...or both?

We are taking steps to ensure we continue to better serve our members and colleagues. This copy of *Registered Nurse Journal* has arrived at your doorstep thanks to Canada Post. The association will always offer traditional delivery of our flagship publication right to your door. However, we recognize some members may prefer a digital copy of the magazine.

When you renewed your membership for the 2011–2012 membership year, you may have adjusted your preferences as they relate to delivery of your magazine. Please know those changes have been recorded and will come into effect in the coming weeks. Should you wish to change the way you receive future issues of *Registered Nurse Journal*, please change your preferences at [www.RNAO.org/RNdeliveryoptions](http://www.RNAO.org/RNdeliveryoptions).