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158 Pearl Street
Toronto ON, M5H 1L3
Phone: 416-599-1925 Toll-Free: 1-800-268-7199
Fax: 416-599-1926
Website: www.rnao.org E-mail: editor@rnao.org
Letters to the editor: letters@rnao.org

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EDITOR'S NOTE KIMBERLEY KEARSEY

A little learning goes a long way

WHEN I BEGAN WORKING AT RNAO more than 11 years ago, I knew very little about nursing. One of the most intriguing and educational experiences I had in those early months of my career came when I shadowed two community health nurses, one in Toronto and one in Kincardine. That experience helped me to understand the profession a little bit better, and provided me with a glimpse of life as an RN.

The newest member of our editorial team, Melissa Di Costanzo, was offered a similar opportunity earlier this year. She shadowed two staff nurses, one in Fergus and another in Ottawa. Observing two RNs with the same job title as they engage in vastly different practices revealed to her – and now to readers – the multiplicity of skills required in staff nursing. Her feature (page 12) provides a wonderful reminder of the many layers of complexity that make this profession so fascinating.

The experiences and perspectives of RNs will always be varied and diverse, especially as they relate to everyday

challenges at the bedside. However, some of the broad, overarching issues that affect the profession are consistent from sector to sector. Perhaps that's why RNAO's role as the voice for the profession is so important (page 20). Your board of directors recognizes that, and embarked on strategic planning late last year that involved talking to members about what RNAO is doing well, and where it needs to improve. The results of that strategizing, and the views that you shared, are revealed in a special pull-out section in this issue (page 15).

As any nurse knows, continuous learning makes for a better RN. That same mantra applies at RNAO. Whether it's our newest writer in the communications department or our board of directors and leadership team; learning just a little bit more about the lives of RNs will only make us better at what we do. **RN**