

# MAILBAG

RNAO WANTS YOUR COMMENTS  
ON WHAT YOU'VE READ IN RNJ.  
WRITE TO US (250 WORDS MAX)  
AT [LETTERS@RNAO.CA](mailto:LETTERS@RNAO.CA)



## Comments may explain rift between RNs and other disciplines

Re: Nursing in the News, More RNs needed to avert nursing home tragedies, Nov/Dec 2013

I felt your recent article was quite insensitive to RPNs and PSWs. There was a comment reportedly made by RNAO's president (Rhonda Seidman-Carlson), stating: "RNs are highly trained and capable of dealing with unpredictable patients, but most nursing homes are largely staffed with RPNs and PSWs." While I understand the intent of the comment was to increase the number of RNs available to residents in the homes, your wording implies that RPNs and PSWs are incapable and not highly trained. They are capable and highly trained, within their scope of practice. The comment also implied that RPNs cannot "deal" with unpredictable patients. The CNO requires RNs to care for patients with unpredictable outcomes. "Dealing" with unpredictable patients may include transferring care to an RN. It may also include collaborating with an NP or doctor, giving necessary medications, or using crisis prevention and intervention techniques to de-escalate a situation, among other things. The president's comment was the same as hearing that RNs are "just" nurses when compared to doctors. It's patronizing and degrading. It may be semantics, but comments like these may

explain the palpable rift between RNs and other disciplines. The issue in nursing homes and hospitals across the country is a shortage of all health-care professionals. Each discipline plays an important role in health outcomes for our clients. Please choose your words more carefully in the future. Let our co-workers know we value them and stand behind increasing staffing for all health-care professionals to protect our patients.

Jessica Ebare  
Cambridge, Ontario

## Caring is at the heart of nursing

Re: In the End, What nursing means to me, Nov/Dec 2013

Bravo Sheryll Pahati for describing the essence of caring in your moving article. I couldn't agree more. Caring is the very essence of nursing and is the foundation of everything we do. Let's never lose sight of it.

Barbara Steele  
London, Ontario

## Nice to see support for immunization

Re: To immunize or not to immunize, President's View, Nov/Dec 2013

I would like to praise Rhonda (Seidman-Carlson) for her recent column. In it, she encourages nurses to – whenever possible – choose the influenza vaccine to prevent infection and transmission of influenza to the vulnerable in

their care. She also supports the value of immunization programs by referencing lessons of the past, most notably the resurgence of mumps and measles in the U.K., and polio in India. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization's (NACI) *Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine for 2013–2014* notes that anaphylaxis to eggs is no longer a reason to withhold influenza vaccine. NACI recommends the vaccine for those at risk of influenza-related complications, including: those with heart disease, diabetes mellitus, cancer, immune-compromising conditions (due to underlying disease and/or therapy), renal disease,

anemia and morbid obesity; children six months to five years; adults over 65 years; and pregnant women. NACI also recommends vaccination for workers employed or volunteering in a health-care setting. Nurses who receive an influenza vaccine are role modeling acceptance, and in doing so, support a society where immunizations provide population protection from various vaccine-preventable infections. Influenza vaccine is publicly funded in Ontario for everyone older than six months. I, like Rhonda, have had my flu shot this year.

Margaret McIntyre  
Whitby, Ontario

DON'T FORGET TO  
**VOTE**

VOTE ON AGM  
GOVERNANCE ITEMS  
APRIL 15–APRIL 30  
YOUR VOICE NEEDS  
TO BE HEARD!

RNAO members play a role in deciding important governance issues that affect the current and future direction of RNAO.

They do this by voting (electronically) on who gets to sit on the association's board of directors, the selection of RNAO's auditors, and more. Results of the voting will be announced at the annual general meeting (AGM) in May. The AGM will be broken into two sessions: the governance/business session will take place in the morning, and the membership consultation is scheduled for the afternoon. Previously, members chose 'voting delegates' to represent their views at the AGM. Under the new system, which came into effect last year, 'consultation representatives' will be chosen to participate in the afternoon session.

Voting for the AGM governance items will be by electronic means, beginning at 12:00 noon (EST) on April 15 and closing at 12:00 noon (EST) on April 30. You can vote at anytime during this voting period.

Visit [www.RNAO.ca/AGM2014](http://www.RNAO.ca/AGM2014) to learn more