

NURSING NOTES



DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH (NOVEMBER)

DVD helps health professionals care for elderly with diabetes

The Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA) recently recognized a group of diabetes educators, including RNAO long-term care best practice co-ordinator Heather Woodbeck (right), for developing a DVD that helps health professionals caring for seniors with diabetes in long-term care. The *Seniors Health Knowledge Network*

Diabetes Community of Practice (SHKN Diabetes CoP) received the *CDA Diabetes Resource Award* in October, along with \$750. Nurses represent one professional group on the SHKN Diabetes CoP, and Woodbeck is a founding member. She continues to raise awareness of *Diabetes 101*, which she describes as a "...truly collaborative project." The SHKN Diabetes CoP launched a monthly webcast series (based on the DVD) in



September. To find out more, visit www.seniorshealthknowledge.network.com

New CCDC helps patients with complex diabetes

RNAO member Trish Crawford has taken on the role of interim director for Peterborough's new Centre for Complex Diabetes Care (CCDC), one of only six such centres in Ontario. Housed at Peterborough Regional Health Centre, the CCDC brings

together an interdisciplinary team to provide short term, intensive case management. The centre opened in September and is expected to be fully operational by January. It "works with patients to identify issues that may interfere with their ability to manage their diabetes," Crawford says, noting the group will provide services for the roughly 15

per cent of patients who become unstable because of related health issues such as kidney function, high blood pressure and heart disease, as well as psychosocial and economic barriers. Crawford says: "The goal is to help these patients to make incremental but meaningful changes that, over time, improve their health and quality of life."

Being HIV positive does not equate to being a criminal

The Supreme Court of Canada absolved HIV carriers of the legal obligation to inform sex partners about their condition as long as they have a low level of the virus and wear a condom. RNAO adopted this view in early 2012, endorsing the *Toronto Day of Action against the Criminalization of HIV*. The association's stance is that with anti-retrovirals and condoms, being HIV positive does not necessarily mean someone poses significant risk to a sexual partner and should be considered a "criminal." The court ruled 14 years ago that people with HIV must inform their sex partners of their condition, or face a charge of aggravated sexual assault, which

carries a maximum life sentence. On Oct. 5, that duty to disclose was removed.

Canada first for home care giant, SEHC

Saint Elizabeth Health Care (SEHC) was recognized this fall by Excellence Canada with its highest level of achievement, the *Canada Order of Excellence Award*. It is the first home and community care service



provider to earn the ranking. The country's governor general hands out the award to organizations that have met or exceeded criteria related to leadership, planning, programs, customer/client focus, people engagement, process management and partner relations. "Home and community care has an increasingly critical role to play within our health system as the country continues to experience changes in demographics, technology and knowledge exchange," says Shirlee Sharkey, former RNAO president and SEHC president and CEO (left). "This award validates the approach we take to always look beyond ourselves."

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In memoriam
RNAO EXTENDS ITS
DEEPEST CONDOLENCES TO
FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF

Ethel Meade,
an activist and advocate on health-care issues, and one of the founding members of the Ontario Health Coalition. Meade was an instrumental member of Ontario's Elder Health Coalition, which was set up to bring together 40 provincial organizations (RNAO included) to help create and shape healthy public policy for older persons. She passed away Oct. 10, just four days shy of her 93rd birthday.