

# NURSING NOTES

## RN author releases newest book



Two years ago, Judith Shamian, president of the International Council of Nurses, approached Tilda Shalof, a critical care nurse and bestselling author, to ask her to write her next book about home care. Shalof refused, noting she wasn't all that interested in nursing outside the hospital sector, but admitting privately that she didn't actually know much about home care. Although addicted to the pace and chaos of the hospital setting, Shamian's request got Shalof thinking, and she finally gave in to

her curiosity and agreed to write *Bringing it Home: A nurse discovers health care beyond the hospital*. This is Shalof's fifth in a line of books she calls memoirs. But her research on this one was a bit different. To learn more about home care, Shalof toured Ontario and the Maritimes for eight months, visiting adult day programs, NP-led clinics, people in their homes, and community health centres catering to people living on the street. The book chronicles her discoveries. Shalof was a keynote speaker at RNAO's 2014 AGM, sharing anecdotes from the book, and her 30-year career. To find out more, visit [www.nursetilda.com](http://www.nursetilda.com)

## Fears realized with release of study on refugee health

When the federal government announced it would begin cutting back on funding through the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) in July 2012, leaving refugee claimants without access to supplemental health benefits, RNs were outraged. RNAO issued an action alert, wrote an open letter to the prime minister and premier, and participated in a number of public rallies to urge the government to reconsider. Nurses' concern for the well-being of refugees, many of whom are vulnerable because they have already experienced trauma and hardship even before arriving in Canada, has come to the forefront once again with the release of a study that found admission rates for refugee children at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children (HSC) doubled after IFHP coverage was cut. Researchers conducted a one-year review spanning six months before and after the funding cuts, and found

6.4 per cent of refugee patients in the ER at HSC actually had to be admitted. Six months later, that rate jumped to 12 per cent, suggesting parents delayed seeking care until their children became very ill. Ontario announced that, in December 2013, it would begin filling the gap left by the cuts. According to the study, HSC was left covering almost 90 per cent of the costs it incurred caring for refugee children during the research period. Although the government says the cuts will save \$100 million over five years, researchers behind these recent numbers, published in *Public Library of Science Journal* (May 2014) wonder if the costs are only going to go up in the long run.

## Happy and healthy transitions start and end with RNs

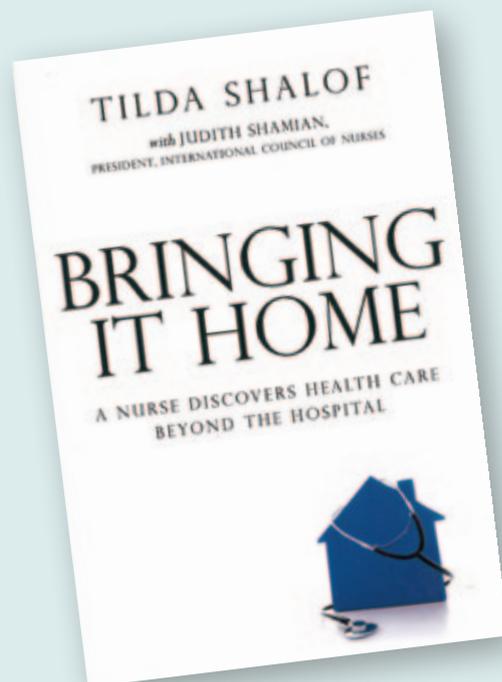
To ensure people continue to receive safe and effective care when they move from one part of the health system to another – whether between care providers

(during shift changes), units of the same organization, or from one organization to another (hospital to nursing home) – RNAO has released its *Care Transitions* best practice guideline (BPG), and a comprehensive set of recommendations to help ensure patients don't fall through the cracks. The guideline calls for an increased role for nurses on interprofessional teams, and more effective communication between team members, patients, their families and caregivers. Gaps in care during transitions can affect everything from the medications someone is prescribed to their physical and psychological needs. The BPG is available online at [RNAO.ca/BPG](http://RNAO.ca/BPG)

## MPs talk suicide prevention

This summer, Canada's MPs will be challenged to engage in conversations about suicide with their constituents as part of a national grassroots prevention campaign created by the Mental Health

Commission of Canada (MHCC). The campaign, called #308conversations (there are 308 MPs), will address one of the greatest barriers to preventing suicide: stigma and the reluctance of society to discuss this issue openly. According to MHCC, there are 3,900 suicides in Canada each year, and 90 per cent of them can be attributed to a mental illness or mental health problem. MPs are being asked to bring together interested community members and stakeholders to share information about what is working and where the gaps in service are, allowing Canadians to learn from the experiences and ideas that are working in other parts of the country. To find out more, visit [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/308conversations](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/308conversations) **RN**



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