Knowledge Transfer
By Irma Jean Bajnok, RN, MSzN, PhD, Director, IABPG Centre, RNAO

We all know how hard it is to change something we were taught years ago, and how devastating it can feel to learn that it no longer works, wasn’t based on sound evidence, or is now out of date because of new information or evidence. That’s what’s at play every day in our health-care system. We have research related to clinical conditions, work environment issues, and managerial practices, yet, much of it sits in research reports, is available to only a few, or falls on deaf ears in the practice setting. This doesn’t mean that health-care professionals do not care about best evidence and doing what is right for their patients; however the systems in health care do not always support a spirit of enquiry or an evidence-based practice culture. We need to start applying and expanding those systems that make a difference in knowledge transfer for our own sakes, the sake of our patients and the system overall. Knowledge transfer is a significant challenge. In health care, we know that it takes 12 years or more to move knowledge from the latest research into practice. This happens right across disciplines — physicians, nurses, and other health-care professionals. In Canada, there is now a strong recognition that best practice guidelines, or clinical practice guidelines (CPGs) need to be brought into the mainstream. Our provincial premiers, through the Council of the Federation, recently identified CPGs as one of three priorities in health care across the country. The Ontario government’s passage of the Excellent Care for All Act (2010) enshrines the use of both clinical and healthy work environment best practice guidelines in health care.

For years now, RNAO has been leading the charge to bring the best nursing knowledge from the literature to practitioners through its best practice guidelines program. Another example of the transfer of knowledge is RNAO’s BPSO® initiative, which supports the creation of evidence-based practice cultures. Best Practice Spotlight Organizations® (BPSOs®) are health-care facilities where best practice guidelines address quality improvement and clinical issues, and are implemented and sustained over time, with the support of RNAO’s BPSO® team and other BPSO® organizations. Strategies related to the selection of BPGs, careful context specific implementation, technology support, measurement and sustained use are all part of the RNAO BPSO® program.

RNAO isn’t in this alone. Numerous organizations across Ontario have embraced the BPSO® initiative and have provided recommendations and feedback about how to strengthen the program and make it even more meaningful for patients. Innovative strategies such as RNAO’s new Nursing Order Sets, and NQuIRE are the result of organizations asking RNAO to make more direct linkages to technology and to provide direction on better ways to evaluate the impact of BPG use on patient health.

There is no question the BPSO® initiative is fast becoming recognized as the strategy of choice to create evidence-based practice cultures in health care that make a difference for care providers and patients. RNAO has enrolled 60 organizations around the world in the initiative representing almost 300 health-care sites. The BPSO® program is a successful, and much needed knowledge transfer strategy to serve patients, providers and our health-care system as we make the mammoth move from a culture of tradition, and resistance about making too much change too soon, to one of embracing best evidence faster. What we are aiming for is a culture where we focus on providing the highest quality care possible with today’s knowledge, and where we consistently embrace outcomes related to better individual and population health, provider and client satisfaction, and outstanding cost effective organization and system performance.
More than 150 people attended RNAO’s annual BPSO® Knowledge Exchange Summit held in Toronto earlier this year. The energizing event provided a forum for representatives of Best Practice Spotlight Organizations®, RNAO staff, and those engaged in research to meet, network and exchange ideas about best practice guideline dissemination, implementation, evaluation and sustainability.

The day began with a keynote address provided by Dr. Debra Bourne, Provincial Chief Nursing Officer, which focused on the facilitators within the BPG program that support evidence-based nursing practice, and the importance of supporting clinical inquiry and leadership at the point of care. Dr. Irma Jean Bajnok, who oversees the BPG program provided the audience with an overview of the guideline development, implementation and evaluation activities currently underway and ones being planned for the future.

The Summit included several knowledge-exchange workshops. Monique Lloyd, Rita Wilson and Bajnok led a session on “Evidence-Based Nursing Indicators and Order Sets: Promoting Quality at the Point of Care” while a representative from Quality Healthcare Network discussed “Quality Improvement as a Sustainability Strategy”. Dr. Jenny Ploeg, from McMaster University, led a workshop on “The Art of Writing for Publication”.

The Summit also featured a presentation by investigators Dr. Barbara Davies and Dr. Kathryn Higuchi from the University of Ottawa. They shared initial findings of a longitudinal, multi-site study involving nine BPSO® organizations they are leading entitled “Guideline Implementation for Improved Client/Patient Outcomes”. The study is focused on the improvement of client/patient outcomes through: enhancing sustainability action planning; providing data about client/patient outcomes; providing data about the barriers and supports to improving patient/client outcomes; and providing educational and networking opportunities for leaders at each BPSO® to exchange successful strategies among sites implementing the same guideline.

A series of small-group knowledge café discussions allowed participants to discuss a range of topics related to technology-enabled guideline implementation, staff engagement, knowledge-spread, sustainability and impact. The BPSO®s also displayed storyboards and posters to share highlights of their BPSO® work. It was a great opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of lessons-learned.

After a rewarding day of sharing information, strategies, skills and experiences, participants felt energized and had a sense of renewed commitment toward enhancing patient/client outcomes and supporting nurses as knowledge professionals through the BPSO® initiative.
Alternative Approaches to the Use of Restraints

By Brenda Dusek, RN, MN, Program Manager, RNAO

Nurses play a significant role in promoting client safety. Despite the enactment of the Patient Restraints Minimization Act (2001), frontline healthcare providers continue to have strong concerns regarding the use of restraints. The new RNAO nursing best practice guideline, Promoting Safety: Alternative Approaches to the Use of Restraints, focuses on the care of individuals who are at risk for behaviours that may result in harm to themselves or others and lead to the possible use of restraints. The use of restraints has resulted in serious injury – including death. Promoting Safety: Alternative Approaches to the Use of Restraints offers nurses a model which will assist them to examine the approach in their practice to the use of restraints, and gain insight on the available evidence for the use of alternative practices to the use of restraints. The guideline offers evidence-based practice recommendations concerning:

- Prevention, alternative approaches, and assessment;
- Implementation of alternative approaches including de-escalation, interventions, and crisis management; and
- Restraint use as a last resort only after all other alternatives have proven ineffective.

The promotion of safe, evidence-based care that prevents and minimizes the use of restraints is an important and significant role for nurses in the promotion of client safety.

To access the new guideline, please visit http://rnao.ca/restraints_guideline.
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – June 15th
By Melissa Di Costanzo, BJ (Hons), Communications Officer, RNAO

Reprinted from the Best Practices in Long-Term Care Newsletter, spring 2012

The Hon. Alice Wong, Canada’s Minister of State for Seniors, visited the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario (RNAO) office in Toronto on Friday, June 15 to announce funding for the development of a best practice guideline geared to greater awareness of elder abuse. The event was timed to coincide with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The guideline will explore how to identify abuse and strategies for intervention when instances of abuse are known or suspected. The financial support is being provided as part of the New Horizons for Seniors Program, a Pan-Canadian initiative. To assist organizations to implement the guideline, RNAO also plans to develop an e-learning tool, a health education factsheet as well as indicators to chart the BPG’s success.

Previously, federal funds were received in 2010 to support a joint project led by RNAO and the Canadian Nurses Association to promote awareness of elder abuse at participating Prevention of Elder Abuse Centres of Excellence (PEACE) sites in long-term care homes across Canada. The project’s aims were to educate health-care workers and the community about elder abuse, intervention strategies, and the rights of long-term care residents.

NQIURE and Evidence-Based Nursing Order Sets: Translating RNAO BPGs into Quality Patient Outcomes

By Monique Lloyd, RN, PhD, Research Manager, RNAO and Rita Wilson, RN, MN, Med., eHealth Program Manager, RNAO

In the fall of 2011, the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario launched the development of Nursing Quality Indicators for Reporting and Evaluation (NQuIRE), targeted to its Best Practice Spotlight Organizations®. NQuIRE is an e-reporting system and database of nursing-sensitive indicators reflecting the structure (nurse staffing), processes (nursing assessment and interventions), and clinical outcomes of nursing care related to implementation of RNAO best practice guidelines in BPSOs®. BPSOs® will regularly collect and submit data to the NQuIRE database on indicators relevant to the guidelines selected for implementation, and to the organization’s context of care. As an example, indicators for the RNAO BPG Prevention of Falls and Fall Injuries in the Older Adult include:

Structure
• Nurse care hours per patient day
• Nursing skill mix
• Nursing turnover and absenteeism
• Model of nursing care delivery
• Level of nursing education

Process
• Fall risk assessment
• Fall risk assessment following a fall
• Documentation of fall prevention or injury reduction plan
• Restraint use

Outcome
• Falls rate
• Falls resulting in injury

Indicators have been developed for 15 RNAO clinical BPGs, and BPSOs® will be able to submit data on these indicators to NQuIRE in September 2012. The process indicators, as noted above, will reflect the practice recommendations in the RNAO BPGs and corresponding nursing order sets. Each nursing order set is comprised of nursing intervention statements that are linked to the supporting evidence, and are formulated based on international terminology standards: International Classification for Nursing Practice (ICNP) and Systematized Nomenclature for Medical and Clinical Terms (SNOWMED-CT). They are applicable to clinicians across the spectrum of care, including acute care, home health care, long-term care and community care.

RNAO nursing order sets are intended to optimize patient safety, health outcomes and nursing practice.

Nursing order sets and NQuIRE will facilitate the evaluation of BPG implementation in BPSOs® by providing a mechanism to link specific evidence-based interventions (or process indicators) to the guideline outcome indicators. NQuIRE and nursing order sets will be extended to all current and future provincial, national and international RNAO BPSO® entities.

Accessing RNAO Nursing Order Sets
Based on a newly formed partnership between RNAO and PatientOrderSets.com (http://www.patientordersets.com/nursing-order-sets/), RNAO’s Nursing Order Sets will be part of the PatientOrderSets.com reference library and web-based order entry system. The first 15 order sets will be available in this format in August 2012. Order sets for the remainder of the BPGs will be added as they become available, with all of the existing BPGs complete with order sets by spring 2013.

For pricing information, or queries about the various implementation options, please contact Seth Rudin at seth.rudin@patientordersets.com or Rita Wilson at rwilson@rnao.org.
Our International BPSO® Reach is Expanding!

By Heather McConnell, RN, BScN, MA(Ed), Associate Director, RNAO

The Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario is delighted to announce that the BPSO® initiative continues to expand beyond Canada’s borders. The partnerships (see below for details) that have recently been established are enriching the nursing profession and the patient experience by providing the global nursing community with access to evidence-based resources that support nursing practice and improve patient outcomes. Resources to support the involvement of international sites in the BPSO® initiative have been committed by these academic and service partners. RNAO is looking forward to ongoing involvement with these new BPSO® organizations in the months and years to come.

During a week-long visit to Spain in early February to celebrate the launch of eight Best Practice Spotlight Organizations®, Dr. Doris Grinspun, RNAO CEO, and Dr. Irma Jane Bajnok, Director of the International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines Centre, provided educational workshops on how to implement best practice guidelines to nurse leaders in that country. The workshops included a focus on sharing this knowledge with other nurses and health-care professionals using RNAO’s network of champions strategy. The intent is to continue this work in Spain with the support of the Nursing and Healthcare Research Unit (Invesťeniscii) and the Spanish Collaborating Centre of the Joanna Briggs Institute.

During the month of March, representatives from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) visited Toronto to sign an agreement with RNAO to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization® Host. The ANMF will oversee the implementation of BPGs in various facilities across Australia, and released an RFP for interested sites this spring. The BPSO® co-ordinator, Trish Currie from ANMF, traveled to Ontario in July to participate in the 10th annual clinical Summer Institute and an orientation with RNAO team members in order to gain an understanding of the various strategies and approaches to knowledge transfer that RNAO utilizes to support the BPSO® initiative.

In July, Doris Grinspun traveled to South America to lead workshops with two BPSOs® in Chile – Clínica las Condes, Santiago de Chile (BPSO® – Service Organization) and Universidad de Chile, Facultad de Medicina – Escuela de Enfermería, Santiago de Chile (BPSO® – Academic) – and two BPSOs® in Colombia – Hospital Cardio Infantil in Bogota, and Fundación Oftalmológica de Santander, Santander, Colombia.

Maria Elena Rojas, director of nursing at Clínica Las Condes, says: “this partnership aims to empower our health professionals, giving them the opportunity to base their practice on the evidence, and change the focus of the work of nurses, based on evidence and not only experience.”

Juan Vielmas, director of the nursing school at Universidad de Chile, says “we are one of the few universities, which are included in this project, backed by our curriculum, with the idea of giving continuity to the academic excellence that identifies us as a school.”

RNAO CEO Doris Grinspun (in the foreground) celebrates the end of a very successful training course with members of RNAO’s newest BPSOs® – Clínica las Condes, Santiago de Chile; Universidad de Chile, Facultad de Medicina – Escuela de Enfermería, Santiago de Chile; Hospital Cardio Infantil, Bogotá, Colombia; and Fundación Oftalmológica de Santander, Santander, Colombia.

Representatives from the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) visited Toronto in March to sign an agreement with RNAO to become a Best Practice Spotlight Organization® (BPSO®) Host. From left to right are: RNAO’s Irma Jane Bajnok, Robert Bonner of ANMF, Doris Grinspun, RNAO CEO; Elizabeth Dabars of ANMF; RNAO President Rhonda Seidman-Carlson and David McNeil, RNAO’s immediate past president.
RNAO Communities: New Communities Launching in 2012

By Janet Chee, RN, BScN, MN, PMP, Senior Program Manager, RNAO

RNAO Communities, the free, online, professional networking site that was launched in January 2011 has had a tremendous year. Three hundred Smoking Cessation Champions from across Canada, have been networking and engaging in various opportunities to share knowledge and resources around implementing RNAO’s Integrating Smoking Cessation into Daily Nursing Practice best practice guideline.

Building on the success of this community, RNAO launched two new communities this spring:

• BPSO® Community: Supports Best Practice Spotlight Organizations® to plan, implement and sustain clinical and healthy work environment guidelines.

• Addictions and Mental Health Community: Focuses on supporting nurses and other health-care professionals who are working with clients with addictions or mental health issues.

To become a member of RNAO Communities, visit us at http://communities.rnao.ca. If you have any questions, please contact Janet Chee at jchee@RNAO.org or 1-800-268-7199 x205.

Celebrating the BPSO® Journey

RNAO’s 14 newly designated Best Practice Spotlight Organizations® have significantly contributed to the creation of evidence-based practice cultures across the province. Their work was celebrated during the opening ceremonies of RNAO’s annual general meeting in Toronto on April 26, 2012. Representatives from each BPSO® accepted their designation in front of over 500 guests, including nursing leaders from across the province, representatives from Ontario’s political parties and other distinguished nurses and health-care professionals. While Doris Grinspun and Irma Jean Bajnok handed out designation certificates, a video vignette highlighting the impact of the BPSO® experience at each organization was shared with the audience, and each site was enthusiastically acknowledged by the crowd.

The commitment of these newly designated BPSOs® to clinical excellence and evidence-based practice was clear in the highlights they shared of their three-year journey to BPSO® designation. The pride they expressed in these accomplishments, and the new heights they have reached, was clear for all to see. They are now looking forward to the opportunity to share their experiences with others as they act as mentor organizations to new BPSOs® and continue their work in guideline implementation, evaluation and sustainability.

The newly designated BPSOs® are: CBI CanCare Health Services Inc; CarePartners; Fairview Mennonite Home; Grand River Hospital; Guelph General Hospital; Hamilton Niagara Halton Brant LHIN; Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital; Hôpital Montfort Hospital; MacKenzie Health (formerly York Central Hospital); Saint Michael’s Hospital; Thunder Bay District Health Unit; Toronto Public Health; Trent University; and Windsor Essex Community Health Centre.

Hôpital Montfort Hospital

“Our 3 year participation has provided us the opportunity to build a solid foundation in order to continue to pursue and implement the nursing best practice guidelines in the future.”

Toronto Public Health

“With the introduction of BPSO®, we are more systematic in our program designs. The experience has brought the benefit of knowledge sharing, co-operation and evidence informed decision making to enhance public health practices.”

CBI CanCare Health Services Inc.

“The organization as a whole is more aware of how to accomplish clients’ individual needs. There’s been a realization of how front-line nursing staff are more richly responsible for the care they provide to their clients.”
Breastfeeding is the best way to provide optimal nutritional, immunological and emotional nurturing for newborns. Health Canada and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend that breastmilk should be the only food or drink for the first six months of an infant’s life. This recommendation is an important part of RNAO’s Breastfeeding Best Practice Guidelines for Nurses (2007). To support the promotion of breastfeeding as the best start for an infant’s growth and development, the WHO and the United Nation’s Children Fund (UNICEF) launched the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), in 1991 as a global effort to implement practices that protect, promote and support breastfeeding in health-care facilities.

RNAO is committed to cultivating knowledge-based nursing practices to shape health care now and in the future. In support of healthy infant growth, RNAO’s International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines Centre has created a Breastfeeding eLearning course that outlines how nurses and other health-care providers can support mothers and their newborns to begin breastfeeding following birth. The eLearning course incorporates RNAO’s breastfeeding BPG and the WHO/UNICEF 20-hour course for hospital and maternity staff, and the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, Integrated Ten Steps and WHO Code Practice Outcome Indicators for Hospitals and Community Health Services (2011). It is designed to assist hospitals, public health units and other maternal child settings seeking designation as Baby-Friendly to achieve the educational requirements recommended by the WHO/UNICEF. Content for the course was developed by a provincial advisory committee.

Resources to assist staff in fulfilling the three-hour clinical requirement have also been included. The course presents the policy tools and clinical content that are needed for Baby Friendly Initiative designation to ensure that both mother and infant receive the best care and transition to a good start. This FREE course is available on RNAO’s website and can be accessed at www.elearning.rnao.ca.

BPSOs®: Organization-Wide Support for Evidence-Based Practice Cultures

Representatives from 15 new Ontario Best Practice Spotlight Organizations® came together April 4 and 5 at a retreat in Toronto to launch their BPSO® journey. The very energetic participants were eager to begin their guideline implementation activities and share their ideas and strategies to support practice change within their organizations. Over these two days, they took the opportunity to network with other new BPSO® organizations and learn from mentors whose organizations have already received BPSO® designation.

This fourth cohort of BPSOs® includes a number of firsts for the spotlight initiative. Two Rivers Family Health Team, the North Bay Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic and Ontario Telemedicine Network are three unique organizations that have joined other sites in this expanding initiative. They are all focusing on integrating best practice guidelines into their daily practice in order to support evidence-based nursing care.

Provincial Chief Nursing Officer Debra Bournes, Ontario’s Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and Doris Grinspun, Chief Executive Officer of RNAO, attended the event and shared their vision for the BPSO® initiative and the impact nurses have on clinical outcomes through the promotion and implementation of evidence-based practices. Leaders from recently designated BPSOs®, presented on topics ranging from staff engagement through the Best Practice Champions Network®, to planning for sustainability. The two-day event also included interactive sessions that enabled participants to share their implementation goals and strategies, view poster displays, and attend presentations on a range of BPSO® research studies.

The 15 new BPSOs® are: Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care; Bayshore Home Health; Bluewater Health; Centre for Addiction and Mental Health; Credit Valley Hospital and Trillium Health Centre; Grey Bruce Health Unit; Hotel Dieu Hospital; Mount Sinai Hospital; North Bay Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic; Ontario Telemedicine Network; peopleCare; Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre; Two Rivers Family Health Team; VHA Home Health Care; and Women’s College Hospital.

Promoting, Protecting and Supporting Healthy Infant Growth and Development
Welcome to the Team!

Grace Suva joined RNAO as one of two, new Nursing Research Associates for the International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines Centre. She completed her Master of Nursing at Ryerson University with a focus on research, education and health policy. She has previously worked at an acute care hospital as a research nurse/clinical trials co-ordinator in nephrology and rheumatology. Her work with RNAO involves assisting with the systematic review process for the development and review of the clinical and healthy work environments best practice guidelines. Grace is passionate about evidence-based practice, and looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to improved patient outcomes through the BPG program.

Sarah Xiao joined RNAO’s International Affairs and Best Practice Guidelines Centre as a Nursing Research Associate in January. She graduated from the Master of Science program at Queen’s University and was a research fellow at the Museum of Health Care. Her thesis involved examining the factors influencing weight gain among persons with psychosis and schizophrenia. Sarah is interested in raising awareness about mental health issues, and looks forward to all the learning opportunities at RNAO.

Sabrina Merali joined RNAO’s International Affairs and Best Practice Guideline Centre as a Program Manager earlier this year. Sabrina is a Registered Nurse who earned a Bachelor’s in Health Science specializing in rural health from the University of Western Ontario, an undergraduate degree in nursing from the University of Toronto and, most recently, a Master’s of Nursing from the University of Toronto. Sabrina's experiences in the health-care system stem from working in both the hospital and public health care system in chronic disease prevention. Sabrina is particularly interested in the social determinants of health and environmental health, and the influence nursing has on improving health outcomes.

Lauren Nickol joined RNAO as the Event Planning and Marketing Co-ordinator. She has a Bachelor of Arts from Wilfrid Laurier University and a Post-Graduate Certificate in event management from Niagara College. Lauren’s current focus is on coordinating RNAO professional development workshops and Institutes. Lauren is interested in health promotion and wellness and looks forward to contributing to the work of the IABPG Centre.

Rita Wilson has worked as a consultant on several RNAO eHealth projects since 2008. In April 2012, she accepted the position of eHealth Program Manager. Rita has a Master's degree in Nursing and another in adult education. Her passion for technology and nursing fuels her interest in improving patient safety and promoting quality outcomes by disseminating technological solutions that integrate evidence-based resources into practice settings. She is leading the nursing order set project at RNAO, and is the nursing representative on eHealth Ontario’s Business and Technical Committee, which is responsible for developing the Ontario EHR Interoperability Standards.

Upcoming Events

- Preceptorship for Nurses Workshop
  September 27, 2012
  TBA
- Healthy Work Environment Institute
  September 30 - October 5, 2012
  Hockley Valley Resort,
  Orangeville, ON

For more information on all these events go to: www.rnao.ca/events.