



Goodbye and thank you

I CANNOT BELIEVE I AM WRITING my last column. My term as your president ends in May, and I will turn things over to Vanessa Burkoski. RNAO is in excellent hands with Vanessa.

In a Q&A in this magazine in the spring of 2012, I was asked to share my philosophy of nursing and leadership, what I hoped to accomplish in my tenure, and what I thought I brought to the role of president. It is time to reflect on that conversation, looking back two years to see what's happened. How did I lead? How did I follow? And how different am I now than two years ago?

In that Q&A, I talked about my passion for the profession and the privilege I feel as a nurse to be so connected with people. I know my passion and my belief in the profession have been witnessed by many RNAO members. I have had the opportunity to speak with thousands of direct care nurses and they have heard and reacted to this passion. I have had real discussions with nurses, and I have heard what members are saying.

It was through these interactions, and thanks to the voices of nurses, that I realized part of my mandate should be talking about bullying. I needed to work with nurses to take the power away from a culture of bullying and help colleagues to recognize, speak about and change incivility and lateral violence with and among nurses. I have had the opportunity to speak with chapters, regions

without chapters, interest groups, health-care organizations and nursing students about this important issue, which has become a cornerstone of my presidency. It is something I am committed to continue to talk about when I step down in May.

In 2012, I also spoke about the need for RNAO to focus more attention on direct care nurses. This did not mean we

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would take our eye off the ball of enabling and enhancing the role of the NP, but given the reality within health care, and given the results of our membership survey, we needed to put a brighter spotlight on the RN.

So what has happened? RNAO updated its mission, vision and values, and reworded its ENDS to ensure the “nurse” is front and centre. We also led a provincial task force focused on primary care, and delivered the influential *Primary Solutions for Primary Care* report. RNAO launched

institutes for nurses to learn from each other with the goal of enhancing nursing practice in primary care.

As your president, I have co-chaired a subcommittee of the Joint Provincial Nursing Committee (JPNC) focusing on optimizing the nursing workforce, with particular attention on home care. Recommendations from this committee will be presented

aspirations. I have been able to travel to many parts of the province, and a common theme I hear in my travels relates to the transformation in health care. While the majority of nurses work in the hospital sector, it is clear these nurses will experience great change as more care moves to the community. I believe the next evolution of support for nurses should arm them with the knowledge, skill and comfort to transition their work in this changing health-care environment.

I imagine that within the next five to 10 years, more RNs will be needed in home care, community care, street nursing and primary care. I see RNAO playing a pivotal role in assisting this transition. I am looking forward to working alongside the new board to help make it as smooth and as positive as possible.

I want to thank RNAO’s courageous board, our awesome CEO and her magnificent team at home office, and our passionate and loyal membership. You reached out to me. You shared your stories. And you helped me provide support and guidance to the board as we traversed through some new waters. I will be on the board for one more year, and look forward to continuing to hear from you and sharing your passion for the profession and the people you serve. **RN**

RHONDA SEIDMAN-CARLSON, RN, MN, IS PRESIDENT OF RNAO.