



THE GERONTOLOGICAL
NURSING ASSOCIATION
ONTARIO

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2017 - VOLUME 4 - ISSUE 3



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT - Julie's Key Messages



Welcome to our final GNAO newsletter edition of 2017! As always, it is a pleasure to share with you what we have been working on over the past several months. The theme of this work has been CHANGE. Change is a funny thing, really. It's something we all fear at times, but can also bring opportunity for growth and so many exciting possibilities. It is in the spirit of possibilities that I write this column.

Change in Chapters

The first change is significant for several of our chapters. After many years of dedication and tireless leadership, the executive of the Bluewater, Greater Ottawa Area, London and Area and the South East chapters have stepped down. I would like to take a moment to thank each of these members who have made many important contributions to our organization and to our profession. We are incredibly grateful for your years of service.

With their departure, and with no new leaders presently identified, the Board has made the decision to move these chapters to inactive. Moving to an inactive status, versus closing the chapter, allows an opportunity for new leaders to take their chance to lead local members and revitalize their chapter. Of course, the Board would never expect you to do this alone. Which is why the existing chapters with executives are ready and waiting to mentor and encourage you every step of the way! Chapters that are no revitalized prior to our April 2019 AGM will be welcomed into nearby chapters. Certainly, we will provide updates to the affected chapters, as well as the larger membership, as we move ahead with this change.

Change in Education

As you've learned of the changes happening at the chapter level, I'm certain some of you are wondering how GNAO will continue to meet the education needs of members in these chapters. The Board has given this point a lot of attention. We recognize education is an important component of your membership (perhaps the most important to some), thus we are committed to continuing to provide education across Ontario. In the short term, our active chapters have started to look at ways to make their education sessions more accessible via various technologies (i.e., OTN). In the longer term, we hope to be able to use more interactive and accessible technologies, such as web-based meeting platforms, to engage members across the province in learning opportunities. Our north East chapter is leading this venture towards the use of new technologies to deliver education. The goal is to create a roll-out plan for the entire province by Fall 2018.

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ABOUT US

Our Mission: To make a positive difference in the lives of older people and the nurses who care for them.

Our Vision: All older people in the province of Ontario are cared for by nurses whose practice is evidence-informed, relationship-centered and meets gerontological nursing standards.

Website: <http://gnaontario.org/>

Social Media: Facebook & Twitter



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT - *Continued from Page 1*

To be sure you do not miss out on education events happening throughout the province, please check out the education section of our newly refreshed website [here](#) and consider following us on social media.

Change in Conference Schedule

As I have written about it in previous columns, GNAO has moved from an annual to a biennial conference schedule. This new approach complements our national colleagues, CGNA, who host their conference in opposite years, also in the Spring.

We are very excited to gather again as a province, when we meet in Niagara Falls on April 12 & 13, 2018. The planning committee, made up of members from our Niagara, Greater Hamilton Area and North West chapters, has an engaging day planned. In the spirit of the work we do as gerontological nurses to engage partners across sectors, disciplines, and caregivers both informal and formal, the day will speak to how it takes a village to make a positive difference in the lives of older adults and the people who care for them. And, as if our first conference in four years wasn't enough, we are proud to welcome keynote speaker, Dr. Samir Sinha, who will share stories of Mount Sinai's successful ACE strategy with eager conference attendees.

We know this conference will be a must-see event, so please be sure to watch for updates on our website and social media, including registration which will open in early 2018. Please join our GNAO village by sharing your successes and engaging in conversations to strengthen the future of gerontological nursing!

As I conclude this column, I want to encourage you to reflect on what GNAO means to you and how you want to see us grow. If you are interested in playing an active role in the ideas listed above or any other opportunities you can envision, I would love to chat more about how we can make that possible for you. The strength of our association lies in courageous and inspiring leaders like you, now is your chance to embrace change and leave your mark!

Yours in gerontological nursing,

Julie Rubel

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PS- I would like to wish you and your 'village' a very happy holiday season!

GNAO Membership Benefits



Did you know that your GNAO membership provides you with conjoint membership in the Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association (CGNA). This allows you to access many ways to build your gerontological knowledge including a subscription to 'Perspectives', the peer reviewed e-journal and the ability to review archived webinars on the CGNA website ([Click here](#)).

The archives presently contain more than 20 webinars on a broad range of topics. Access is easy, simply enter your email and CGNA password and you can watch the webinars **FREE** of charge! CGNA is hard at work creating new educational sessions as we speak, be sure to follow CGNA and GNAO on social media for updates on upcoming webinar events.

SAVE THE DATE !



"It Takes A Village"

April 12-13, 2018

Embassy Suites, Niagara Falls

Gerontological Nursing Association Ontario

As you have read in the President's Column, we are busy planning an exciting day of learning, networking and fun for GNAO members and non-members alike this spring. We are thrilled to welcome our keynote speaker, Dr. Samir Sinha, who will discuss the ACE Strategy born at Mount Sinai and now spreading across the country!

In the spirit of "It Takes A Village", we are building a line-up of speakers who care for older adults in different settings and work collaboratively to achieve success. We look forward to sharing more about our dynamic speakers with you in the coming weeks.

Here are a few fun things to know about the conference:



Dr. Samir Sinha

- The conference begins on Thursday evening with an night of art. Join us as we welcome a local art therapist who will lead us in a creative project. And, since we are in Niagara, there may even be wine!
- The Embassy Suites is newly renovated with beautiful, spacious rooms. Consider grabbing a friend and coming down early or staying another night, the hotel has offered great rates for both Thursday and Friday night.
- Speaking of beautiful, we are excited to announce lunch on Friday will be served with a view of the Falls. Networking with colleagues and stunning views, you can't go wrong.

We look forward to seeing you in April. Be sure to stay tuned to our website and social media for all the latest details, including registration and early bird rates coming January 2018!

EVENTS RECAP

Deprescribing Medications

Greater Hamilton Area Chapter AGM



By Annie Lam

On October 26th, the Greater Hamilton Area Chapter hosted their Annual General Meeting and education event. We were extremely lucky to be able to welcome Dr. Cara Tannenbaum, the Director of the Canadian Deprescribing Network, for a riveting evening discussion on deprescribing medications. Deprescribing has been gaining widespread attention over the last few years. Many practitioners across the nation are now engaging in deprescribing, that is, the planned process of reducing and/or stopping medications that are unnecessary or harmful.

Our discussions circled around promoting the practice of deprescribing, but also increasing access to non-pharmacological interventions and tools to support staff in the care of older adults. Dr. Tannenbaum provided nurses with practical and realistic tips on how to communicate with both physicians as well as patients to empower them to think about and proceed with deprescribing.

The key message is that deprescribing is **everyone's** responsibility.

The Canadian Deprescribing Network (CaDeN) has truly led this movement across the nation. They have developed a multitude of tools for practitioners and the general public. The event has fueled passion into our nurses and we are hoping to partner with Dr. Tannenbaum and her team. More information on this on page 5. For now, we encourage you to visit CaDEN at: <http://deprescribing.org/caden/>

2017 Toronto Geriatrics Update



This year, GNAO attended the 2017 Toronto Geriatrics Update Course in Toronto. The Toronto Geriatrics Update Course is a conference that provides current and relevant knowledge for the care of older adults to health care providers. The conference is hosted by the Sinai Health System and University Health Network.

While there were several fantastic topics and breakout group sessions, here are a few highlights from the update course!

On medical cannabis use in the older patient - There is moderate quality evidence to support the use of cannabinoids for treatment of chronic pain. There are several strain types of medical cannabis with variable percentages of the compound. Recent news shows that older persons using medical cannabis have reduced or stopped other prescription medications (i.e., benzodiazepines).

On Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) - One year in, there have been several successful cases of MAID, as well as many new challenges in practice. Dr. Joshua Wales *recounts his first experience of MAID* in a hauntingly beautiful reflection. Ongoing discussions and controversy surround the idea of advanced MAID requests - currently, this is only approved in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The ongoing ethical question moving forward will be: Is advanced age and/or a perceived "completed life" a reasonable criteria for MAID?



To keep in touch with upcoming events through Sinai Health System, be sure to check out their website [here](#).

How Can Gerontological Nurses Help Our Patients Through Deprescribing?



Canadian
Deprescribing
Network



Réseau
canadien pour
la déprescription

The Canadian Deprescribing Network (CaDeN) is a group of health care leaders, researchers and patient advocates working together to promote the deprescribing of medications that may no longer be of benefit or may be causing harm. Polypharmacy, as we know, is a prevalent concern among older adults.

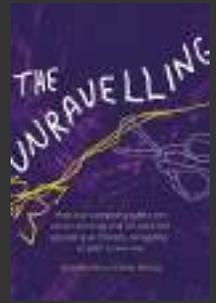
CaDeN's research has shown that 71% of Canadian seniors are willing to stop a medication if their doctor says it is possible.

With that being said, we know that it often *takes a village* to bring on change.

Nurses in particular have a very special and unique therapeutic relationship with our older patients. We are in an important position to empower and educate our patients and their families on deprescribing. We also do not work alone and collaborate with multidisciplinary team members and clinicians to provide care for our older patients.

GNAO is pleased to announce a new partnership with CaDeN and Dr. Tannenbaum. Our goal is to build capacity among gerontological nurses by providing them with the knowledge and tools to be able to work towards deprescribing.

While we are in the very beginning stages of our work, we have currently established a subcommittee who will work closely with Dr. Tannenbaum. Stay tuned for more information on how you can be part of this exciting work!



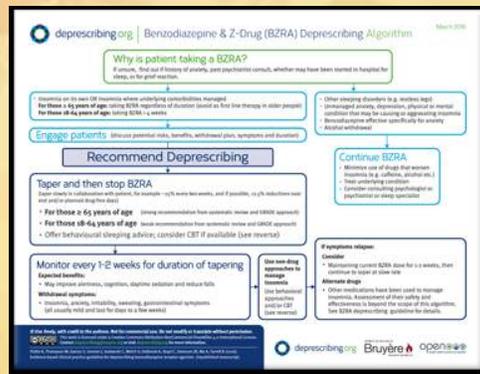
The Unravelling

This is a book about dementia and family caregiving, a memoir by Calgary brothers Clem and Olivier Martini.

In text by Clem and artwork by Olivier, *The Unravelling* tells the story of their family's tenuous caregiving situation. Olivier has schizophrenia and has lived with his mother for nearly 40 years; she's provided him with help during his battles with mental illness, and he's provided her with companionship and support as she's become more frail. The book chronicles how that caregiving relationship topples over once their mother develops dementia. What happens when caregivers can no longer provide care, and need it themselves?

With anger, dry humour, and hope, *The Unravelling* tells the story of one family's journey with mental illness, dementia, and caregiving, through a poignant graphic narrative from Olivier accompanied by text from his brother, award-winning playwright and novelist Clem Martini.

For more information about the book, including a short video interview with Clem, visit the website [here](#).



For this newsletter, we want to highlight CaDeN's work on benzodiazepines. Benzodiazepine receptor agonists (BZRA) are a class of medications/drugs also called "hypnotics" or "sedatives" that are commonly used for insomnia, among other conditions. These medications affect memory, concentration and balance.

Check out the algorithm [here](#).

Stay tuned for the publication of their guideline in summer 2018.

Improving Education Accessibility



As an organization, it is important for us to continue to provide ongoing education and resources for our members to support their practice and care of older adults. As we continue to grow and undergo change and transformation, we would like to ask Chapter presidents to consider accessibility when planning events. We encourage you to look into the option of OTN and/or teleconference. For all chapters who currently hold OTN events, we ask that you please record them and share the recorded events with us. We would like to be able to share them with all GNAO members on our website.

Ontario Geriatrics Learning Centre (OGLC)



Have you heard of the Ontario Geriatrics Learning Centre (OGLC)? The Ontario Geriatrics Learning Centre is a collaborative online space where leading Ontario healthcare professionals have been invited to share their knowledge and expertise with those caring for the elderly. The site features on-demand, high-quality lectures which cover a range of topics.

GNAO currently has a representative on the OGLC committee and is excited to be partnering with several leaders in sharing resources for health care professionals, including nurses.

We strongly encourage you to check out the website to broaden your knowledge and skills in elder care.

<http://geriatrics.otn.ca/>

GNAO Website Resources

We are currently compiling a list of education training workshops, certifications and resources on our website. If you know of a training program, workshop or resource that you think would be beneficial to gerontological nursing, please contact **Annie (Communications Director)** so that it can be shared on our future database.