



# Newsletter

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### JULIE'S KEY MESSAGES



## ABOUT US

**GNAO is proud to be RNAO's Interest Group of the Year in 2015!**

**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



Happy New Year fellow GNAO members! I hope you enjoyed a safe and happy holiday season. As we look forward to 2016, we at GNAO are first taking the opportunity to look back at all that we accomplished during 2015 and then to strategize how best to move us ahead in 2016. I am proud to acknowledge my fellow board members and our work in this column. If you find yourself reading this column and wanting to become more

involved, I encourage you to contact me ([julie.rubel@gmail.com](mailto:julie.rubel@gmail.com)), I am always happy to talk about gerontological nursing and explore what's possible. To achieve my objective to look back and move forward, I have gone back to my first column published in December 2014. As a reminder, you can view past newsletters on our website .

### Key Message #1: Mentorship Matters

This area is what I am most proud of since moving into the President role more than a year ago. Not only are we at GNAO saying mentorship matters, we are saying it is the way forward. Mentorship opportunities bring new, fresh faces and ideas to the table as well as engaging the expertise of those who have built and sustained GNAO over the years. You will find examples of mentorship on our board, both formal and informal, be it in leadership transitions (i.e. President to President Elect) or in learning new technologies such as in our upcoming social media tutorials. We are also proud of our mentorship program, launched at the April 2015 AGM which saw three students sponsored by GNAO members join our AGM and network with gerontological nursing leaders. Because of this success, we have decided to again offer this mentorship program calling it "Dinner with a Mentor". Individual members or chapters are encouraged to sponsor a student or new graduate to join them for dinner at the AGM and the networking to follow. If you are interested in sponsoring a student/ new grad or are a student/ new grad and would like to attend, please contact me for further details. As we move into 2016, we are excited to explore the possibilities of social media in connecting GNAO members with mentorship opportunities as well as expanding our mentorship program to include our 42nd Provincial Conference in Kingston later this fall.

### Key Message #2: Communicating With You in a Timely & Meaningful Way is Important to Us

In 2015 GNAO took a giant step forward in our communication abilities by moving into social media. If you have not yet 'liked' or 'followed' us, please do so at [Gerontological Nursing Association Ontario - GNAO](http://GerontologicalNursingAssociationOntario-GNAO) and [@GNAOntario](https://twitter.com/GNAOntario). When you do, you will find information about GNAO and upcoming events as well as events that relate to gerontological nursing and may be of interest to you. We are committed to

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## JULIE'S KEY MESSAGES (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

continuing to utilize our website as a place to find all of the above information as well as to serve as a connection to your chapter and its leaders. We are proud of the variety of education delivery methods offered by our chapters and are committed to furthering the use of methods such as Webinars and OTN to enable members in both urban and rural centres to take part in our education sessions. Reviewing and enhancing our education strategies will be a part of our 2016 work, you can look forward to updates in future newsletters.

### **Key Message #3: Additional Opportunities to Connect With You**

In 2015, we moved to separate our AGM from our Provincial Conference to meet Not-For-Profit legislation requirements. We are excited that in 2016 we will hold both our spring AGM and our fall conference, giving us two opportunities to network with and learn from our members. **Please mark your calendars for our AGM April 21, 2016 in Toronto at Villa Colombo where Dr. Giovanni Marotta will be our speaker.** Also please plan to join us in Kingston on November 4, 2016 for our Provincial Conference. For additional information about both events, please stay tuned via email and social media. You will also find GNAO board members at events throughout the province, be it at local chapter events or events hosted by groups such as CGNA, RAO or RPNAO. These events are important to us not only to meet members but to continue to highlight the work of GNAO and the issues that matter to older adults and the nurses who care for them. To further our work in this area, we are currently exploring ways to bring Provincial Board members to areas across the province (physically or virtually) to learn more about what GNAO means to you and how we can continue to enhance the services we provide. We recognize it is our members that make our organization great and we are always looking for ways to engage each of you in the work we do.

In closing, I want to thank you for a great 2015 and to share my best wishes for 2016. I am confident that many great things lie ahead. I also believe our accomplishments are made stronger when we work as a collective, so I leave you with a challenge. I encourage you to seek out a member of your local chapter and share an idea or passion. I know that any of our chapters will welcome you and find a way to move it forward with you.

Yours in Gerontological Nursing,

Julie Rubel,

## PROFESSIONAL ADVOCACY ACCESS TO PALLIATIVE CARE

A new Canadian Cancer Society report released says critically ill Canadians are falling through the cracks when it comes to palliative care. Improvements are desperately needed to Canada's costly and inconsistent patchwork of palliative care, which is bad for patients and for the sustainability of our healthcare system.

The new study, which was released Tuesday, comes one week before provincial health-care ministers sit down in Vancouver with their federal counterpart to discuss a new deal on health. It also comes as governments consider new laws to allow doctor-assisted death in response to last year's landmark Supreme Court of Canada ruling. That ruling, which removes physician-assisted death from the Criminal Code, is set to take effect next month, but on Monday the court heard arguments from Ottawa asking for a six-month extension of that deadline.

With end-of-life issues now on the national agenda, the Cancer Society says it's time for governments to guarantee all Canadians access to palliative care through new legislation. Please click onto the below link to access the "Right to Care: Palliative Care for All Canadians" Report.

(<http://www.cancer.ca/~media/cancer.ca/CW/get%20involved/take%20action/Palliative-care-report-2016-EN.pdf?la=en>)

## INTERESTING READ



### 'BEING MORTAL' ATUL GAWANDE

This book is a must read for those working in the field of geriatrics and arguably, for all health professionals. Dr. Gawande (a practicing surgeon) takes readers inside his own personal tales to illustrate the choices faced by older adults as they navigate the latter years of their lives. Through his own experiences, he creates a picture of how these choices create a lived reality that many older adults have not anticipated, and in some cases, never wanted. Dr. Gawande uses these stories to advocate for a new philosophy in caring for older adults. He suggests that health care professionals to seek not extend life but enhance quality of life.

Gerontological nurses will appreciate this book for its willingness to discuss the quality of life decisions faced by many older adults. They will also support Dr. Gawande's call to include geriatric specific content in all health care providers education. We highly recommend this book. After you've read it, please send us a message to let us know what you thought.

## A NOTE OF FAREWELL & APPRECIATION

To the members of GNAO,

It is with a heavy and sad heart that I submit/announce my resignation from the provincial board of GNAO. As you are all aware, our posting message came through this past week for Victoria, (CFB Esquimalt) so as a family we will be moving to BC at the end of July. So although I am saddened to leave you and GNAO, I am excited for the new journey I am about to embark on and will take my memories and experiences with me to lean on as I venture into new uncharted territories!

I would like to take this time to thank you all for your support, not only at the professional level but also at the personal level as well, especially when it came to asking about Jason and his deployment status. It is a rare thing outside of the military "family" to find such compassion for someone in the military, when you only see them once or twice a year. I will miss you all.

My intention is to remain active in my role until replaced or June 30th, 2016; whichever comes first.

I wish you well in all that you do. Continue to make a difference in the lives of our older adults and never stop advocating for them and our Geriatric nurses. I have no words of wisdom to leave you with, but know that if you are in the Victoria area, please look me up; I'd love to see you!

Sadly, yet honourably submitted,

Megan Hiltz

## LETTER OF APPRECIATION

As you have just read, GNAO is preparing to say goodbye to Megan Hiltz, our current President-Elect and President of the South East Chapter. Megan will be missed by her board colleagues, local chapter and community of practice, though we know that she will continue to keep involved in gerontological nursing.

Megan has been an active member of the South East (formerly Kingston Chapter) for 4 years. She has worn many hats during this time, and for those of you who know Megan, she has done this beautifully. Megan brings passion and undying commitment to everything that she does. She has been active in engaging students in her chapter, and in gerontological practice in general, whether they are RNs, RPNs or PSWs. Megan has also been the driving force behind the 2016 conference (see sidebar). Megan's persistence and positive attitude have led to a revitalization of the chapter.

Once Megan joined the provincial GNAO board, she quickly engaged the group by bringing together her passion for geriatrics with her passion for military service. Megan created an initiative to link GNAO with military service personnel to send cards of thanks. It was a novel idea which Megan made possible through her overwhelming sense of pride for military service and her courage to take us where we had not been before. Her bravery and kind approach are what many of us will miss the most.

Megan, thank you for your years of service, for always seeing the possibilities, and for the laughs. We look forward to your continued contributions and we know that you will enrich the community in BC just as you have here in Ontario. We wish you all the best!

## FEBRUARY 11, 2016 GNAO North East Chapter

*Ageism in Health Care*

Sudbury, Ontario

OTN Site #0214, System #2

To attend in person or via OTN, register online through [HERE](#) by Monday, February 8.

## FEBRUARY 23, 2016 GNAO GTA Chapter

*Ethical Issues and Moral*

*Distress in End of Life Care*

*Presented by Lorrie Hamilton,*

*Director, Ethics and Research,*

*Bioethicist at TEGH.*

Toronto, Ontario

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Please RSVP to Donna Locke at [dlocke@belmonthouse.com](mailto:dlocke@belmonthouse.com)

## NOVEMBER 4, 2016

42nd Annual GNAO Conference

The South East Chapter is excited to welcome you to Kingston, the Limestone City, on November 4, 2016 for the 42nd Annual GNAO Conference! Our focus this year is aging across the health care spectrum – "Gerontological Nursing is more than you think! Nursing & Aging Across the Continuum".

We hope to have piqued your interest enough and that you will consider joining us on November 4, 2016 in Kingston. Stay tuned to the GNAO website, newsletter and email for further details!

# A RECAP OF 2015

## A BUSY YEAR OF SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

### DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE (EDUCATION)

Bluewater Chapter in October 2015

Palliative Care: Improving the Quality of Living and Dying

For more information on Chapter events, please contact  
Chapter President: Charlotte Bumstead

South East Chapter in June 2015

Assisted Suicide Assisted Death –Choices and Challenges

For more information on Chapter events, please contact Chapter  
President: Megan Hiltz

The North East Chapter in May 2015

Nurse's Week Activities

For more information on Chapter events, please contact Chapter  
President: Lorna A Rick

London and Area Chapter in September 2015

The Impact of Caring for Seniors on the Caregiver's Stress  
level

For more information on Chapter events, please contact  
Chapter President: Carol Miller

North West Chapter in May & October 2015

Confronting Ageism-An Open Discussion-Panel Presentation

Scratching the Surface-Promoting Best Practice in Skin and  
Wound Care-Panel Presentation with Nursing, Nutrition  
and PT perspective

For more information on Chapter events, please contact  
Chapter President: Therese Lim

The Greater Ottawa Area Chapter in September 2015

"The Spectrum of Choices at End of Life" Advance Care Planning,  
Palliative Care and the Recent Supreme Court Ruling

For more information on Chapter events, please contact Chapter  
President: Linda Haley

We have only featured selected educational events in  
various Chapters, there are more GNAO Chapters that  
held exciting educational sessions that were not  
featured in this issue:

Central East Chapter

Greater Hamilton Chapter

Lambton Chapter

Greater Toronto Area

Niagara Chapter

Nov 13 2014 – Rights, Risks Responsibilities Part 2

April 30 2015– Dementia Simulation Experience

Nov 5 – Words as agent for change

Feb 2016 – Physician Assisted Dying

April 2016 - Physician Assisted Dying

For more information on Chapter events, please contact Chapter  
President: Michele Bliss

### Do you have an interest in sharing your interests in gerontology with like-minded people?

The GNAO Team is informing you of the several professional development opportunities available to you through specific board positions that are open for applications. The commitment is a two-year term on a volunteer basis. We are hoping to recruit members who are interested in sharing their gerontological perspective, in creating educational activities for members, assisting with communication to membership, and assisting with professional advocacy events.

Please feel free to contact any of the Board members to find out more about available opportunities.

Contact information can be found here: <http://gnaontario.org/gnao2013/about-us/>.

# A RECAP OF 2015

## POLITICAL ADVOCACY

- Addressing non-compliance issues with Ministry of Labour Relations  
Medi-Green – marijuana marketing  
RNAO collaborating with CARP regarding Pharmacare
- Federal Election
- Options for Assisted Dying

For more information, please contact Professional Advocacy Director: Jan Mitchell

## STUDENT & NEW GRADUATE ENGAGEMENT

- Mentorships to nursing students and new graduates
- Employment opportunities
- Financial support: conferences, awards, continuing education...etc
- Peer support via social media: Facebook & Twitter, Discussion Board, and emails

For more information, please contact Student/New Graduate Liaison  
Co-Representatives: Annie Lam & Yessica Rivera Belsham

## MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

- New recruitment strategies
- Diversity in communication portals: emails, Discussion Forum, Facebook, Twitter, GNAO webpage and Newsletter
- Newly published promotional materials: brochures and flyers for general members and students
- Up-to-date GNAO webpage

For more information, please contact:

Membership Co-Chairs: Sarah Gibbens & Karen Bakker-Stephens

Communications Director: Tina Leung



## PROVINCIAL BOARD INITIATIVES

- Maximizing local contacts with nurse specialists such as BSO, PRC, Resource nurses...etc
- Succession planning across local chapter and provincial levels
- Updates in Policy Manual (By-Laws changes)
- Updates in Board Orientation Manual
- Board mentorship opportunities
- Establishing connections and partnerships with other interest groups
- Social media training
- Exploring online formats for educational events to promote access to variety of gerontological nursing knowledge

For more information, please contact:

President: Julie Rubel

President-elect: Megan Hiltz

Past President: Lori Schindel Martin

Treasurer: Gwen Harris

Communications Director: Tina Leung

## BOARD POSITIONS & MENTORSHIP AVAILABLE!

Looking for Opportunities to be Involved in Your Local Chapter of GNAO?

## FIND OUT MORE AT:

<http://gnaontario.org>

OR BY CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER PRESIDENTS!