



National Nursing Week 2023: 'Our Nurses. Our Future.'

It is my pleasure to send greetings to my nursing colleagues this National Nursing Week!

Each year, I appreciate the opportunity for discussion that this celebration brings forth; to reflect upon the work of our profession, and to ground ourselves in our professional knowledge, standards, and ethics.

This year's theme, 'Our Nurses. Our Future.' recognizes nursing's role as part of the greater health care system. While nurses have worked in a caregiving role for much longer than our collective living memory, the nursing profession has evolved through time into the highly skilled and evidence-informed profession it is today, and which will continue to evolve into the future. As nurses, we take every opportunity available to us to learn and plan for better care. We pride ourselves on our implementation of evidence-based practice, trauma-informed and holistic care, and use every modern advancement available to us as we continue to grow and innovate with resources at-hand. Throughout our profession's evolution, nurses have transformed health outcomes and we have incredible capacity to continue to do so.

Presently, health care is scrutinized from countless perspectives. Nurses know that it is time for transformation. Together, our profession has the capability to make sweeping changes to a health care system that currently only benefits a few. To do so, it is important that we take a step back, think about the legacy of health care from a historical perspective and its modern-day ramifications, and look to a new horizon in which we incorporate nursing values and ethics pertaining to accessible, equitable, inclusive, and culturally appropriate care for all. Nurses working in every professional domain understand that defending the highest standards of care while upholding the principles of diversity and equity, and insisting on inclusivity is the only route to a transformed health care system.

While care and compassion remain central to our occupation, we must also acknowledge the health of a global population, advancements in human biological sciences, and research into human conditions and the impacts of social determinants of health. I urge all nurses to consider the combined talents, education, and collaborative drive within our incredible assembly – as the largest group of health care professionals across Canada – and I encourage all to engage actively with our profession because, as a unified body, nursing displays the competence and initiative required for full scale systemic transformation.

Nurses have a vast understanding of the many environments in which we function; locally, regionally, and globally. It is important that we involve ourselves in every aspect of transformation available to us within these realms, both personally and professionally. It is through this action that we have tremendous opportunity to continue to appraise our health care systems and to offer robust analysis to lead and create directional change.

From the perspective of your nursing domain, insist on a cutting-edge approach to care. Our future is the result of our current actions.

Happy National Nursing Week! Be well.

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