


Region 10 Celebrates



**Nurses' Week
2021**

Thank you for all your hard work!



Dear Nurses,

Where do we even start.

This past year has been nothing short of incredible. Day in and day out, our profession has been called upon to do the extraordinary, and to no surprise you have answered.

Few would have the courage to face similar challenges, so this May it is extremely important to celebrate how far you've come. These accomplishments are exceptional, and collectively form the foundation for a future filled with both hope and optimism.

At the forefront, nurses have an invaluable role in the lives of others. Whether in hospitals, care homes or elsewhere in the community, you can be found dedicating your lives in caring for others. Compassion, selflessness, and kindness are a few of the many traits that make us who we are.

**Our sincerest thank you for the lasting impacts you have made.
Happy Nurses' Week.**

**Yours truly,
Region 10 Executive**



Daniela Acosta

**Collaborative Practice
Leader**

Long Term Care



What does a typical day look like in your current nursing profession?

Currently, I am in the role of a Practice Leader in Long-Term Care. This is a challenging, but fun role. A typical day in my role is hard to explain since every day is completely different and ever changing. My responsibilities include promoting best practices and professional development amidst the care team, as well as offer clinical support when needed to the direct care team. For example, I lead two quality improvement teams, Fall Prevention and Nursing Leadership, so my role is to work with these teams to come up with new ways to promote education, policy change, and safer practice in these areas. I am usually reviewing RNO Best Practice Guidelines to make sure that we are meeting all the recommendations, or to brainstorm new ways that we can do so better. I do still get to provide some direct resident care when a resident requires specific medical interventions that are new to the care team. I help ensure that the team has the skills, knowledge, judgement and supplies to meet the residents needs. My most recent project at work has been redesigning the nursing orientation! This has been so fun! I have tried to re-focus it more on hands-on, fun and practical learning, and I created two simulation-based learning activities from scratch.

What made you choose nursing as your career?

When I finished my degree in Biopharmaceutical Sciences, I knew that I did not want to work in a lab. Instead, I sought out another field of work that would be more person-centred. Nursing stuck out to me as a career with lots of opportunities to connect with others, care for others, and make a tangible, immediate difference in their lives. When I went to school for nursing, one year later, I quickly learned that there was so much more to Nursing than meets the eye. It is about caring and people, but it is also about details, science, practical skill, advocacy, ethics and more. In fact, the more I learned about the Profession of Nursing the more I fell in love with it! Now I cannot imagine myself doing anything else.

Do you have a favourite book or movie?

I have a ton of favourite books, but the one that I am recommending to all nurses right now is "When Breath Becomes Air" by Paul Kalanithi. Written by a Brain Surgeon, this story recounts his experience of facing his own mortality after being diagnosed with cancer himself. It's super sad, but it offers invaluable insight into the role of human-values based treatment and care for people with life-limiting diseases. I believe that the lessons from this book have made me a better care provider, today. On a happier note, I also recently read "Start With Why" by Simon Sinek, which is a wonderful read for people and organizations to learn how to articulate and lead with their "why" or "purpose". It's really inspiring and is changing how I explain and promote my organization and myself to the world. I also have dreams of entrepreneurship one day, and this book sets a foundation for that as well!

Carmen Hust

*Nursing Professor, CFMHN
Board Member, Mental
Health Nurse Interest Group*

Mental Health & Education



What does a typical day in your current nursing profession look like?

My typical day in these COVID times starts around 6AM. I try to practice what I preach to my students about the need for self-care so a walk and a time for prayer/contemplation sets the stage for the day. From 8AM you will find me on Zoom, teaching or meeting with students, faculty or colleagues. COVID has change how we teach nursing and we continuously need to come up with creative ways to bring nursing science to life in an online world. I am astonished by the resilience of our students as they adapt to continuous changes in their school, work and personal schedules as our COVID story unfolds. As the coordinator of students in their final year, I have the exciting opportunity to see students transition from school to graduation, then on to first employment as a nurse. I consider myself very fortunate to accompany people committed to learning nursing and becoming a nurse!

What made you choose nursing as your career?

I must admit, I stumbled upon nursing. I do not have any nurses in my family and as a daughter of immigrants who had little understanding of health care in Canada, everyone was genuinely surprised when I came home some 30 years ago and announced I wanted to study nursing. I started my BScN at University of Montréal and never looked back. The friendships, networks and life-making opportunities have been tremendous. I have worked in many areas of nursing including Med Surg, ICU, Home care, management, teaching and finally now Psychiatric/mental health nursing. I have been able to continuously learn and develop and for this, I am thankful. Now I am at the point of giving back to this amazing profession of nursing. I am passionate about nursing students' mental health and their well being. These passions are the focus of my research, and I enjoy supporting psychological wellness being in the workplace as an active member of OPSEU. Perhaps I stumbled into nursing, but it's a path I have only looked up and onward with! I wish the same for all my nursing colleagues!

Favourite season and why?

I am thankful for each season, but I think when walking in the spring I am always reminded of new birth in nature and the ever-present promise that there is always hope. May we always have a season of spring in our practice!

Any bucket list items?

Since I love to walk, I dream of one day walking and participating in the pilgrimage of Camino de Santiago.

Asha Kaye Brown

**Registered Nurse & Sexual
Assault Nurse Examiner**

Emergency Medicine



What does a typical day in your current nursing profession look like?

A typical day can look like many things depending on what “hat” I am wearing. With my ER cap on, I am working on the frontlines of this pandemic, caring for people in any emergency situation you can think of including and in addition to the complexity that COVID-19 brings to every emergency. The next shift could look like me, in my SANE cap, sitting next to a person recounting the events of their assault, providing medical and forensic care alongside the support and resources they need to recover as a part of the Sexual Assault and Partner Abuse Care Program. In either of these roles I’m keeping an eye on my email, and being pulled aside for conversations with my team members about the work being done with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee as we try and make the Emergency Room a safer place for both community members and the staff/ volunteers that keep the place running. We’re focusing this year on the ER experiences of Indigenous people, our local Trans community and the use of force and de-escalation in addition to setting up systems of accountability and sustainability for these efforts.

What made you choose nursing as your career?

I chose it on somewhat of a whim, if I’m being honest. I always thought I would become a lawyer but found the study material to be very dry (sue me!) so when I was considering other options a few family and friends who knew I had an interest in doing volunteer work abroad mentioned nursing might be a good option. Cut to my second-year geriatric placement, first time stepping into a hospital since birth and giving bed baths, passing meds and laughing that I truly had no idea what I was signing up for. Lucky for me, as we gained more responsibilities, I gained a real appreciation for the profession and now I love what I do.

What is your favourite hobby or past-time outside of work?

Pottery! (which I haven’t been able to do much of as the studios have been closed, but we press on and watch videos of other people doing it instead... sigh)

If you could choose a career other than nursing, what would you become?

I’d probably own a coffee shop but I’m still holding out hope on that one so we’ll see!

Chloe Grover

*Registered Nurse & Clinical
Nurse Educator*

Intensive Care



What does a typical day in your current nursing profession look like?

These days it's a lot of very sick COVID patients, but no matter the day it's equal parts-controlled chaos and teamwork. Given that we're dealing with the sickest of the sick in Intensive Care, there is a lot of interdisciplinary team involvement and constant peer learning.

What made you choose nursing as your career?

I love problem-solving and science, plus nursing is so dynamic and teamwork oriented. And there's nothing like getting underpaid to do it! (kidding...but not)

Do you have a favourite book and/or movie?

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall-Kimmerer. There is no more beautiful book than this – I could go back to it a million times for wisdom and grounding.

Dawn Stacey

**Professor, Assistant Director &
Senior Scientist**

Education & Research



What does a typical day in your current nursing profession look like?

As a nursing professor, I teach a graduate course on decision making in clinical practice and teach courses on research methods. In my role as the Assistant Director, I am responsible for managing any issues from our 200 graduate students and leading initiatives to improve the quality of nursing graduate students. I also get to attend the convocation ceremonies twice a year to celebrate the success of our nursing students at the University of Ottawa.

I hold a research chair that provides me with more protected time to work on research focused on helping patients be more active in decisions about their healthcare. For example, I am leading a research team from 4 provinces to conduct a study to identify health decisions Canadians have had to make over the last year during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will inform the development of tools and resources to help them better understand the options and be more active participants in these decisions. Providing patient-centred care is the focus of many provincial governments and hospitals in Canada – this means we need to create better approaches to ensure patients' voices are heard when making patient-centred decisions about their care. My research websites provide many useful resources to support decision making by patients, families, the public, and healthcare professionals <https://decisionaid.ohri.ca> and for helping manage cancer-related symptoms <https://ktcanada.ohri.ca/costars>.

What made you choose nursing as your career?

My mother was a physiotherapist and I was always interested in the health professions. The summers when I was 16, 17 and 19, I worked as a camp counsellor at an "Easter Seals Crippled Children's Camp". I had to provide personal care to children with a range of disabilities and they had conditions such as muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy. Personal care included dressing, bathing, feeding, and brushing their teeth. For camp activities, we took them canoeing, swimming, making crafts, playing games and singing around the campfire. Each summer for a 2-week period, we had children with cystic fibrosis in camp. After giving them chest physical therapies, they were very active and we played baseball games, hiking, and other usual camp activities.

What is your favourite hobby or past-time outside of work?

I love riding my bicycle in the spring, summer and fall. Ottawa and Gatineau have an amazing number of bicycle paths that can easily take you 40 to 50 km without leaving the cities. I ride on my own, with friends, and part of a women's biking club called Cycle Fit Chicks. My aim is to ride for pleasure and socializing with others. It has been an important activity during the last year considering that I have had to work from home.

Thomas Tsuji

Registered Nurse

Pediatrics



What does a typical day in your current nursing profession look like?

The critical care float team is charged with helping to fill short term needs on any unit throughout the hospital. These needs can be as a result of sick calls, or increases in acuity. We work primarily 12-hour shifts, from 0730-1930 or the reverse. About 30 minutes before the start of the shift we get a call from our staffing officer who tells us which units we will be going to support that day. As one could imagine a float team nurse needs to have a significant breadth of knowledge in order to be successful. We could be expected to work in the pediatric intensive care unit and on the mental health unit in one shift. As such, we need to keep up to date with nursing practice changes on all units. We are continually learning new skills and are always well supported by the unit staff.

Some challenges which I face day-to-day include changes in nursing practice, and quickly changing assignments. In order to meet these challenges, I frequently ask for help and support from my peers and continually ask questions to validate my practice. I am always supported by my colleagues for the health and safety of our patients. It is very difficult to provide a complete picture of what a normal day would look like as every day is different.

What made you choose nursing as your career?

I chose nursing because of the strong underpinnings of hands-on care and critical thinking. As a teenager I was a member of a first aid team where we practiced our hands on skills at first aid. I was really drawn to the methodical method of assessment and treatment of first aid patients. When it came time to choose a career I knew that I wanted to do something hands-on and with critical thinking, so nursing came to mind.

What is your favourite hobby or past-time outside of work?

Two of my favourite past times include sailing and cooking. I have been a sailor since I was a teenager. I love to spend time on the water on a small dinghy, or on a windsurfing board. Being on the water is calming and exhilarating at the same time. I really like to cook. One of my favourite recipes is - Hearty Sausage and Kale Soup

What is your favourite part about living in the Ottawa Region?

My favourite part about living in the Ottawa region is the variety of outdoor activities that are available year-round.

Stephanie McLarty

Registered Nurse

Public Health



What does a typical day in your current nursing profession look like?

This past year, a typical day for most public health nurses has been completely focused on supporting the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic and for many of us this has meant learning new skills and adapting to new roles and numerous changes. Unfortunately, as the pandemic persists many of the health promotion and injury prevention programs central to public health have been reduced or paused all together. However, Public Health Nurses remain focused on what they are specifically trained to do – utilize community-based interventions focused on population level health outcomes and health equity impacts. It's a balance of continuously focusing in on specific issues all while simultaneously zooming out to see the big picture.

What made you choose nursing as your career?

I was drawn to the variability of roles and opportunities that are available within the nursing profession and I've been fortunate to have had experiences working in a variety of roles and settings. As a mid-career nurse, it's easy for burn out to creep in and I'm thankful to have great mentors and patient experiences to support me in finding a renewed passion for my nursing career.

What is a quote(s) you live by?

1. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"
2. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead...And this is one of the many reasons why I am a member of RNAO and Region 10.