Stronger Together – Moving Forward with Courage and Conviction

For many of us, 2026 will be remembered as one of constant high-speed change with no slowdown. Everyone I talk to says the same thing. The pace has been fast, almost frantic, with no sign of the usual slight midsummer slowdown. Now autumn is continuing the legacy in the rush forward. Our country and world are experiencing significant turmoil, and some see the path forward through a lens of division and turmoil. Yet, nursing has purposively chosen to take a "stronger together" approach that is firmly rooted in the principles of primary healthcare and a health-for-all foundation for shaping a better world.

The leadership of nurses and nurse practitioners is needed not only to steer a course through these turbulent times but to keep healthcare policies and systems on track with what we know is essential to health. More than ever, we need to lead with integrity, innovation and inspiration to move forward in a way that finds and creates the solutions to the big challenges we are facing. Most of all, we need to move forward with courage and conviction that we are stronger together and together we can and will find a way forward – but it will not be easy.

CNA Update

This issue begins with a strong rallying call from the Canadian Nurses Association (Grdisa 2026) for nurses and nurse practitioners to embrace our collective voice as nurses and nurse practitioners to influence change and make our country and our world a better place to live in for the health of all. The strength of a unified voice on the big issues in health and healthcare matters. It is important for us all to be mindful of this and committed to being supportive and involved in our own individual and collective places of influence.

Supporting Internationally Educated Nurses

In this issue, we also continue the focus on supporting Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs), who play a significant role in the plan for addressing workforce shortages in the nursing profession. Supporting their integration and readiness for practice is an ongoing priority. An article authored by Blays and Cashen (2026) describes a nine-month pilot program known as the Professional Integration and Clinical Readiness Program. Developed at the IWK Health Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, this innovative program supports successful IEN transition and readiness for practice, and ultimately, retention.

Leadership Perspectives

Artificial intelligence (AI) is influencing and exerting changes in many aspects of our profession and our lives. Strudwick et al. (2026) move us beyond being consumers of AI and introduce us to becoming producers of AI. Their article is enlightening and empowering. They encourage us to not only use AI but contribute to its development for applications in nursing.

Next, Russolillo and Carter (2026) provide a thought-provoking commentary on the evolution of clinician scientist roles in healthcare settings and the factors that have influenced their erosion. While historically these roles have been filled primarily by physicians, there is increasing interest in clinician scientists with a variety of healthcare backgrounds, including nursing. Their commentary provides an interesting review of the barriers and facilitators to role implementation and the opportunities to improve healthcare that these roles could inform and facilitate.

A third leadership perspective by Assem-Erhaze (2026) provides a compelling reflection on the experiences encountered in doctoral education programs by nurses who hold multiple marginalized identities and are seeking to pursue future leadership roles. The commentary is insightful and provides new and thought-provoking insights that will be of interest to nurse leaders in multiple settings.

Nursing Research

Lodge et al. (2026) lead this section off with an article that reports on a quality improvement initiative that aimed to improve care for patients presenting to the emergency department (ED) with police under the *Mental Health Act* by reducing transfer of care times between hospital staff and police. The authors evaluated the role of nursing in facilitating such transfers and the impact of implementing a protocol to support increased leadership among nurses in the Mental Health Emergency Services Area of the ED. Their specific interest was whether it would promote timely and consistent engagement in the transfer of care process with police services.

The second article in this section is authored by Dunlop et al. (2026) who write about a quality improvement project to evaluate registered nurse (RN) prescribing in Nova Scotia. They examine the facilitators and barriers to integration of the RN prescriber role and the impact on patients, providers, and health organizations. The evaluation found that the RN prescriber role strengthened nursing practice and improved patient flow and service delivery and was particularly impactful in rural and underserved communities.

Next, Baxter et al. (2026) report the results of a scoping review of a common challenge encountered in long-term care, that of resident-to-resident aggression. Their review focuses on the role of formal leadership in addressing this concerning behaviour, the challenges these behaviours create for leaders and how factors such as inadequate training, a lack of policies, and contextual factors worsen them. The seriousness of the problem and how gaps in resources exacerbate it are revealed.

Finally, Faldas et al. (2026) report on the Hip Fracture Care Transformation Project at Trillium Partners in Toronto, guided by Health Quality Ontario Standards to establish a standardized care pathway with a point-of-care nurse selected to be a clinical coach. Results of the evaluation showed an average reduction of two-days in acute length of stay.

Conclusion

As the papers in this issue demonstrate, while the pace of change in our rapidly evolving world is increasingly intense, nurses and nurse practitioners remain consistent in their pursuit of improvement and bettering the lives of those under their care. I am constantly amazed at their innovation, professionalism and dedication. We hope you will agree as you read through this issue.

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