

# RURAL NURSE CONNECTION

## Official Newsletter of the RNO

### RURAL NURSING IS MY SPECIALITY



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*Journal of Rural Nursing and Health Care*  
<http://rnojournal.binghamton.edu/index.php/RNO>

#### Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

3rd Thursday of February, April, June, August, October and December at 5 pm (CST) online.

#### Executive committee Meeting Schedule

January, March, May, July, September and November at 5pm (CST) online.

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#### Research Grant

RNO awarded the first rural nursing grant October 6, 2011 to researchers in New York. The silent auction brought in over \$1000 dollars in order to fund future grants. Melanie Kalman, RN, PHD, Associate Professor & Director of Research, Upstate Medical University, College of Nursing; Margaret (Meega) Wells, RN, PhD, Assistant Professor Upstate Medical University, College of Nursing; and Pamela Stewart Fahs, RN, DSN, Professor and Endowed Decker Chair of Rural Nursing, Binghamton University, Decker School of Nursing received \$500 to begin research entitled "Matters of Your Heart". The study is designed to increase rural women's knowledge of female heart attack and prodromal symptoms. Check the website for proposal details and deadlines. See the website for proposal deadlines.

#### Rural Nurse Service Award

Bette Ide PhD, RN, FAAN received the bi-annual Rural Nurse Service Award during a dinner on Thursday October 6, 2010. Ide is recognized for her research in Native American Health, methodology studies, and mentoring a large number of native American Nurses with graduate degrees. See the website for nomination forms for next year's winner.

#### RNO Membership

RNO is dedicated to the specialized practice and unique challenges of rural nursing. The organization is distinguished by efforts to establish safe, quality health care for patients in rural and remote regions of the United States. Membership provides opportunities for nurse education, research, and leadership. RNO membership includes registered nurses, licensed practical/vocational nurses, and nursing assistants. Members receive **free** peer reviewed journal, webinars and education offerings. A bi-annual conference supports the latest evidence for practice, research and education. Leadership opportunities with the potential of improving nurse practice.

## President's Column: Health Care Reform

This month's newsletter focuses on recent changes in the way nursing care is provided. New strategies of health care are being funded by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service. In the day when few dollars are going to research, many are reserved for creative strategies to provide quality care, improve health, and reduce costs.

The changes in policy are impacting business models, payment models, even the way individuals access care. Rural nurses are needed to speak up regarding the improvement of facilities, workforces, and patient interface.

In addition, new strategies are needed in quality improvement science and research of rural populations. The Rural Nurse Organization supports many new initiatives to improve care for rural residents. Professional development opportunities include: The RNO monthly webinar series begins again in February, 2012. Many rural residencies and leadership opportunities are available, search the website. The website will also advertise conferences, summits and workshops that improve practice and research.

Speaking of the website, the RNO will issue a call for information as the organization seeks a new home for the website in order to meet the demands of a growing membership.

## Free Webinars

The new season of free RNO webinars for members begins the third Wednesday of February, 2010. Once a month at 1-2 pm Mountain time expert nurses from across the country will gather to discuss important topics. Next year's lineup contains. Ethics of end of life care rural nurses, legalities of rural practice, evidence based management, and farm health issues. Webinars are free for members and cost \$10 for non members. If you interested in speaking an email to [molinariRN@gmail.com](mailto:molinariRN@gmail.com).



## Rural Practice Differences

Presentations at the Rural Nursing Conference in Binghamton, New York revealed many differences in practice expectations, caring conditions, and even in outcome measures. Anticipated changes due to health reform policies are expected to impact patient health and nursing care as well. The changes need to be discussed and studied in order to benefit the profession.

Keynote speaker, Charlene Winters, called for testing the Rural Nursing Theory. She stated the theory is descriptive and needs more testing in order to improve its usefulness.

Rural Nursing Workforce issues are often studied using a variety of frameworks but few discuss rural/urban differences. The newsletter would like to begin a rural nursing theory column. The idea is for members to tell their nursing stories within the framework of rural nursing theory. What is the theory? Many publications discuss the framework that was born in Montana during the 1980s. Clarann Weinert and graduates students completed qualitative studies to describe common principles. Four categories emerged over time: Nursing, environment, person, and distance. Successive studies indicate changes may occur with economic and policy shifts. Lee and Winters edit books describing bedside, community and advanced practice using the theory. Molinari and Bushy use the framework to describe rural nurse practice needs.

The issue is, **What do you think?** What are the specific issues you see in your rural nursing practice? How does health care reform impact your practice? Send 200 word reflections to [rno@bama.ua.edu](mailto:rno@bama.ua.edu) for inclusion in the next newsletter.

## Journal Abstracts

### **Nurse Recruitment and Retention in Rural Newfoundland and Labrador Communities: The Experiences of Healthcare Managers**

Mark Aylward, Alice Gaudine, & Lorna Bennett

Nurse recruitment and retention in rural Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) can prove to be a challenge for rural healthcare managers due to a variety of issues and factors. The characteristics of rural communities along with vast nursing shortages throughout Canada and the world can certainly contribute to those challenges. Research on the topic of nurse recruitment and retention in rural NL is limited, particularly from the perspective of rural healthcare managers. The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the experiences of rural NL healthcare managers contending with nurse recruitment and retention by using a qualitative descriptive design and using content analysis to analyze the data. The findings were categorized to outline barriers and facilitators to nurse recruitment and retention. Implications for further research on this topic are discussed, as well as implications for nursing practice and education.

<http://rnojournl.binghamton.edu/index.php/RNO/index> Pages 54 – 69

### **Obesity Risk Factors for Women Living in the Appalachian Region: An Integrative Review**

Tara O'Brien, & Laura A. Talbot

**Research Objective:** This paper examines the current literature on obesity among women living in the Appalachian region and looks at factors contributing to obesity in this area.

**Methods:** A systematic review was conducted of research published between 1989 and 2009 regarding the research on obesity among women living in the Appalachian region. This review included both urban and rural Appalachian settings. The search used four electronic databases: CINAHL, ERIC, Medline, and Academic Search Premier. The key search terms included: Appalachian region, women, obesity, and mortality. Eight studies met the criteria for our review.

**Results:** The research suggests that both rural and urban Appalachian women report a lack of regular physical activity, and many are at high risk for obesity, which contributes to the high mortality rates in this group. In addition, obesity, poverty, low educational attainment, and cultural norms are associated in this group.

**Conclusions:** In Appalachia, cultural influences handed down for generations are more significant than the urban or rural environment in influencing obesity. To decrease the prevalence of obesity among Appalachian women, nurses need to develop, community-based interventions that take into account the income and health literacy needs of these women.

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**Health Needs Assessment and Nurse-Led Health Care Services of a small Island community: Methodology and Results of a Pilot Study of the Health Status of Residents of Stewart Island, New Zealand**

Jessica Haydon-Clarke BscHons,  
Eileen McKinlay, & Helen Moriarty

**Context:** Provision of health care needs to small remote communities is a challenge requiring careful consideration. Stewart Island is a small island located at the far south of New Zealand. First-line primary health care services are provided by two rural nurse specialists supported on the mainland by a general practitioner and regional hospital 72 kms away. Geographical and professional isolation factors and maintaining personal privacy were key aspects in the design of the study.

**Purpose:** To undertake a health needs assessment of a small isolated community considering both resident and health professional perspectives.

**Methods:** A mixed methodology was employed to undertake the health needs assessment: self administered resident survey and semi-structured interviews with four health professional stakeholders (two on the island and two on the mainland).

**Findings:** The survey attracted 106 returns (approx. 30% of adult residents). Stewart Islanders reported similar rates of established chronic conditions compared to New Zealanders as a whole, indicating the need for access to a full range of primary health care services: acute and chronic care; health promotion and illness prevention. Residents and health professional stakeholders supported the current model of nurse-led health service provision with remote interdisciplinary support. Reported gaps included visiting

allied health services, and issues of professional isolation and professional development for the rural nurses

**Conclusion:** Researching health needs of a confined community raises particular issues in confidential data collection and reporting. Remote health service provision brings unique challenges but Stewart Islanders believe the current model of nurse-led service provision largely meets their needs.

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**International Council of Nurses  
Rural and Remote Nursing  
Network  
A Global Connection**

By Barbara Shellian

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations (NNAs), representing more than 13 million nurses worldwide. Founded in 1899, ICN is the world's first and widest reaching international organization for health professionals. Operated by nurses and leading nurses internationally, ICN works to ensure quality nursing care for all, sound health policies globally, the advancement of nursing knowledge, and the presence worldwide of a respected nursing profession and a competent and satisfied nursing workforce

ICN has provided opportunities for nurses to meet informally at its meetings. However, living in what is becoming an increasingly complex and fast changing world, more immediate ways are needed to communicate and pursue common professional interests. ICN has established Nursing Networks for various groups and specialties within nursing and Rural and

Remote Nursing is represented as a network within the ICN configuration.

ICN has chosen a networking mechanism to do this because networks are about:

- Getting to know people outside your immediate circle of contacts.
- Establishing and using contacts for information, support and other assistance.
- Building relationships and most importantly networks.
- Communicating.

Networks can go beyond organizational, professional, disciplinary and national boundaries. ICN has identified some activities for its networks. They may:

- Identify issues early and monitor how they develop.
- Follow trends.
- Offer special expertise through creating a resource pool from network members.
- Disseminate ICN's and others' work in the area of interest; and organize meetings and conferences.

The International Council of Nurses Rural and Remote Nursing Network – ICN RRNN is an initiative that was actually launched in Canada in 2004 in Sudbury, Ontario at an International Rural Nursing Conference. There was a meeting in Taiwan in June 2005 and objectives and goals were established at that time and co-chairs for the network from the United States and Australia were appointed by ICN. The network struggled to gain momentum but there was a consistent level of enthusiasm from the nurses who attended the meetings.

In May of 2009, a new Core Steering Group (CSG) for the ICN RRNN was convened with co-chairs from Australia and Canada.

The Core Steering Group (CSG) has representation from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, Indonesia, United Kingdom and United States. The CSG meets regularly via Skype and you can imagine the challenge with time zones!

The first activity was to plan a network meeting for the ICN Quadrennial and on July 2nd 2009 at the ICN congress in Durban, South Africa, members of the Rural and Remote Nursing Network's Core Steering Group met with and listened to hundreds of nurses that expressed concerns related to rural and remote nursing. This meeting provided a wonderful opportunity for nurses across the globe to voice their concerns to the core steering group. The group took notes and spoke briefly about how they hope to make the network more active, increase communication venues, and increase list serve membership. It was sobering to listen to the nurses from Africa talk about their concerns and issues and in many ways the issues that we face in the developed world are very minimal compared to the magnitude of challenges in other parts of the world.

The CSG also established objectives for the network and as an evolving and dynamic resource, the ICN Rural and Remote Nursing Network:

- Provides a global forum for identification and discussion of issues related to rural and remote nursing
- Promotes awareness of rural and remote nursing so that the roles, contributions and expertise of rural and remote nurses are understood, respected and optimized within the health care system
- Assists with the development and sharing of knowledge, tools and

guidelines which rural and remote nurses can use to embed specialized skills and competencies into their practice

- Promotes sound rural and remote nursing practice across the globe
- Establishes links between the ICN Rural and Remote Nursing Network and other international organizations, resources and networks to promote the sharing and exchange of knowledge, expertise and experience

The information for the RRNN on the ICN website has been updated and there is now an **online membership form** that can be completed so that you can be added to the list of nurses around the world who belong to the network. You will also be able to receive information from the RRNN as a result of being a member. **There is no charge to belong.** To get to the webpage – go to the ICN website [www.icn.ch](http://www.icn.ch), click on the ICN Networks then go to Rural and Remote Nursing Network and there you are!

The Core Steering Group posts newsletters on the ICN website and there is an opportunity to participate in a Rural Nurses Forum that is part of the website.

The RRNN planned a meeting in Malta in May 2011 at an ICN conference there to

once again gather nurses together to provide a venue to talk about their practice – their successes and their concerns. This was another valuable opportunity to share resources and connect with rural nurses from across the globe.

The RRNN will be having another network meeting at the next ICN Quadrennial Conference in Melbourne Australia in 2013. – so there are many activities on the work plan to be accomplished.

For more information about the ICN Rural and Remote Nursing Network contact: Barb Shellian [barb.shellian@albertahealthservices.ca](mailto:barb.shellian@albertahealthservices.ca) or Jean Barry [barry@icn.ch](mailto:barry@icn.ch) or go to [www.icn.ch](http://www.icn.ch) .

