

Show your Pride during
Nursing Week - May 11 - 17

RPN Voice



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RPN Division



Wilma Duckworth, RPN

Bargaining Conference

Are you a RPN Chief Steward who is interested in sharpening your negotiating skills? Then attend SEIU Local 1 Canada's upcoming bargaining conference on May 19 in Toronto. Identify your goals, priorities and initiatives to negotiate better contracts for RPNs in your workplace.

Take the lead on Nursing Week May 11-17, 2009

Nursing Week is an opportunity for RPNs to educate and inform the public about the critical role they play in Ontario's health care system. SEIU has provided RPN workplace contacts with a Nursing Week Toolkit that has some interesting and creative ways to share the valuable work nurses perform on a daily basis. Talk to your workplace contact about how you can promote Nursing Week at your hospital and in your community.

Do you feel lucky?

This could be your lucky year! SEIU will be drawing prizes for SEIU RPNs. Gifts range from a free RPNAO membership, which includes malpractice insurance, a paid 2010 CNO registration, or gift certificates from some great Canadian stores. Winners will receive a telephone call and their names will be posted on the website on Nursing Day on May 12.

RPNs leading by example

Wilma Duckworth is a RPN who manages the office of a family practice and outpatient clinic that is run by a hospital in Goderich. This clinic looks after patients who do not have a family doctor. Thanks to her, patients who visit the clinic receive high levels of health care service delivery.

An important aspect of Wilma's job is to ensure the clinic is running smoothly. Along with her medical duties, she also schedules doctors to work at the clinic, finds replacement physicians to make up for last minute cancellations, and orders vital medical supplies.

Doctors and patients can't live without her and she has the letters to prove it. When she took a one week vacation, one of the doctors she works with wrote:

"Some of the little things you do are pretty huge things. But last week I realized how much easier my job is because of

you. I really appreciate your organization, compassion, and energy. Thank you so much for all that you do."

Patients also appreciate the valuable work she performs on a daily basis. One very happy patient wrote:

"I am sure it's not often people appreciate your skills, knowledge, compassion and empathetic personality. You chose the right profession and you have been great for my Mom and myself. Thank you very much. Take time to pat yourself on the back. Because of you, you continue to serve our community day in and day out."

Thanks to RPNs like Wilma Duckworth, the standard of health care delivery and service has been bumped up a notch.

SEIU sponsors RPNAO Conference

SEIU Local 1 Canada is a proud gold sponsor of RPNAO's 51st Annual General Meeting & Conference that took place on April 30 - May 1 in Mississauga.

About 200 people from across Ontario attended to learn about

new trends, developments and best practices in the field of nursing.

This sponsorship gave SEIU an opportunity to talk about how our union has helped strengthen the nursing profession.



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RPNs cut wait times in Thunder Bay hospital



Wait times in the emergency department at Thunder Bay Regional Hospital were about four hours long for patients suffering from a minor wound. This changed dramatically after the hospital increased RPN staffing in the emergency. Wait times dropped dramatically to only half-an-hour.

The RPN's main job is to care for patients at Triage 4 and 5. They look after light wounds to free up the

health care team's time to focus on patients in Triage 1, 2 and 3, who require immediate attention or could lose their lives.

Hospital administrators should emulate this case study in other emergency departments across Ontario. Hiring more RPNs, or simply upgrading their shifts to full-time, would greatly alleviate health care waiting periods and shortages throughout the province.

Nursing in 2020 - A snapshot

According to a recent report the future looks bright for RPNs. The report, called *Toward 2020: Visions for Nursing*, produced by the Canadian Nurses Association, outlined how nurses' responsibilities will grow and demand for their skills will increase over the next 10 years. Here are just a few of the predictions:

- RPNs play a larger role in pre-operative, pre-procedure and peri-operative settings

- Long-term care and rehabilitation will be managed mostly by RPNs
- 70% of nurses will have fulltime jobs, compared to only 44% today
- 20% of nurses in leadership positions will be non-white
- Two-third of nurses will work outside hospitals. In 2006, 70% of nurses work in hospitals
- A higher percentage of nurses will be RPNs rather than Registered Nurses

Important Notice

Please take a look at the handout attached to this edition of *The Voice*. It outlines some important legal changes affecting RPNs. It is important that RPNs are aware of these changes. SEIU has highlighted the changes that are of greatest concern to members of the College of Nurses and allied health members who are members of other Colleges.

Regulate retirement homes NOW

Most people picture retirement homes as idyllic places where seniors retire comfortably to enjoy their golden years. But sometimes this couldn't be further from the truth.

There is a nursing home shortage in Ontario. Seniors with serious health problems such as cancer, Alzheimer's, and dementia cannot find a place to live, forcing many to live in a retirement home.

"Nursing homes are required by law to follow standards which ensure their residents are cared for properly," said Carol McDowell, Vice-President of SEIU Local 1 Canada's RPN Division. "But retire-

ment homes have the same legal obligations as a college dorm room. Most people know that the needs of a 17-year old are very different from

“Retirement homes have the same legal obligations as a college dorm room.”

- Carol McDowell
Vice-President

an 87-year old.”

Workers who don't have the right training are administering medications and performing other health care responsibilities. That's why the

Ontario Government needs to start regulating retirement homes now. This includes:

- Outline the medical obligations retirement homes must provide to residents
- Create a Resident's Bill of Rights
- Create elected Residents Councils
- Hire enough staff to care for residents properly
- Train and screen staff appropriately
- Inspect homes on a regular basis
- Define different types and classes of retirement homes

Regulating retirement homes is the best way to ensure elders' medical needs are cared for properly.

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MISSION: To enhance, promote and protect the role of the Registered Practical Nurse in all practice settings.

VISION: We envision a workplace free of professional discrimination, where RPNs are fully utilized, valued and adequately compensated for their knowledge, skill, judgment and their vital contribution to health care.



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