

National Nursing Week



Clockwise from above left: Lois Bebbington RN gives a patient a Chemo Treatment, Mary Chevalier RN and Julia White RN Studying a CAT scan, Leslie Mandzuk RN (on her first day as a nurse) checks a patients heart with a stethoscope.
Photos: Ed Goodfellow - Special to The Star

Nursing's many faces

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Finally, RNs may specialize by providing preventive and acute care in all health care settings to various segments of the population, including newborns (neonatology), children and adolescents (pediatrics), adults and the elderly (gerontology or geriatrics).

RNs may provide basic health care to patients outside of health care settings in such venues as correctional facilities, schools, summer camps and the military. Some travel around the U.S. and abroad providing care to patients in areas with shortages of medical professionals.

Most RNs work as staff nurses, providing critical health care services along with physicians, surgeons and other health care practitioners. However, some choose to become advanced practice nurses, often considered primary health care practitioners who work independently or in collaboration with physicians.

Registered Practical Nurse
Registered Practical Nurses provide nursing care, usually under the direction of a Medical Practitioner, Registered Nurse, or other health team member.

Registered Practical Nurses perform nursing functions, such as taking blood pressure and other vital signs, applying aseptic techniques, ensuring infection control, monitoring nutritional intake and conducting specimen collection. Registered Practical Nurses administer medication, observe and document therapeutic effects, monitor the progress of patients, evaluate the effectiveness of nursing interventions and consult with appropriate members of the health care team.

Employment in this occupation is expected to increase as the health care system continues to shift from institutional to home care for people with chronic illnesses and disabling conditions. As well, a substantial number of job openings will arise each year from the need to replace workers who retire.

The role of Registered Practical Nurses will change as more technology is introduced at the bedside. The growing complexity of nursing care and limiting of hospitalization to critically ill patients will place additional educational demands on the workers employed in acute care.

Nurse Practitioner

The contribution of nurse practitioner services to population and public health is being recognized in a growing number of countries around the world.

Recent research by the International Council of Nurses (ICN) confirms nurse practitioners provide quality health services in a range of settings (ICN, 2001). Nurse practitioners also improve patient and community access to health services.

Nurse practitioners work autonomously, initiating the care process, as well as collaboratively with other health care professionals, most often physicians. Nurse practitioners practise in a variety of community, acute care and long-term care settings.

Although there is no universal definition, international research suggests four common character-

istics of nurse practitioners:

Educational preparation

- Educational preparation at advanced level (master's degree recommended in some countries)

Licensure and regulation

- Legislation to confer and protect the title "nurse practitioner"
- Formal system of licensure, registration, certification and credentialing

Scope of practice

- Authority to prescribe medication
- Authority to prescribe treatment
- Authority to refer clients to other professionals
- Authority to admit patients to hospital

Functions

- Recognized point of contact for clients
- Case Management (own case-load)
- Diagnostic care
- Treatment care
- Preventive care
- Palliative care

According to the Canadian

Nurses' Association, the full integration of nurse practitioners into Canada's health care system can prove instrumental in reducing costs, streamlining the delivery of services and improving the health of Canadians.

Research confirms that nurse practitioners improve the public's access to high quality care at cost savings to the system (Feldman et al., 1987; McGrath, 1990; Munding, 1994; Munding et al., 2000; Kinnersley et al., 2000; Shum et al., 2000).

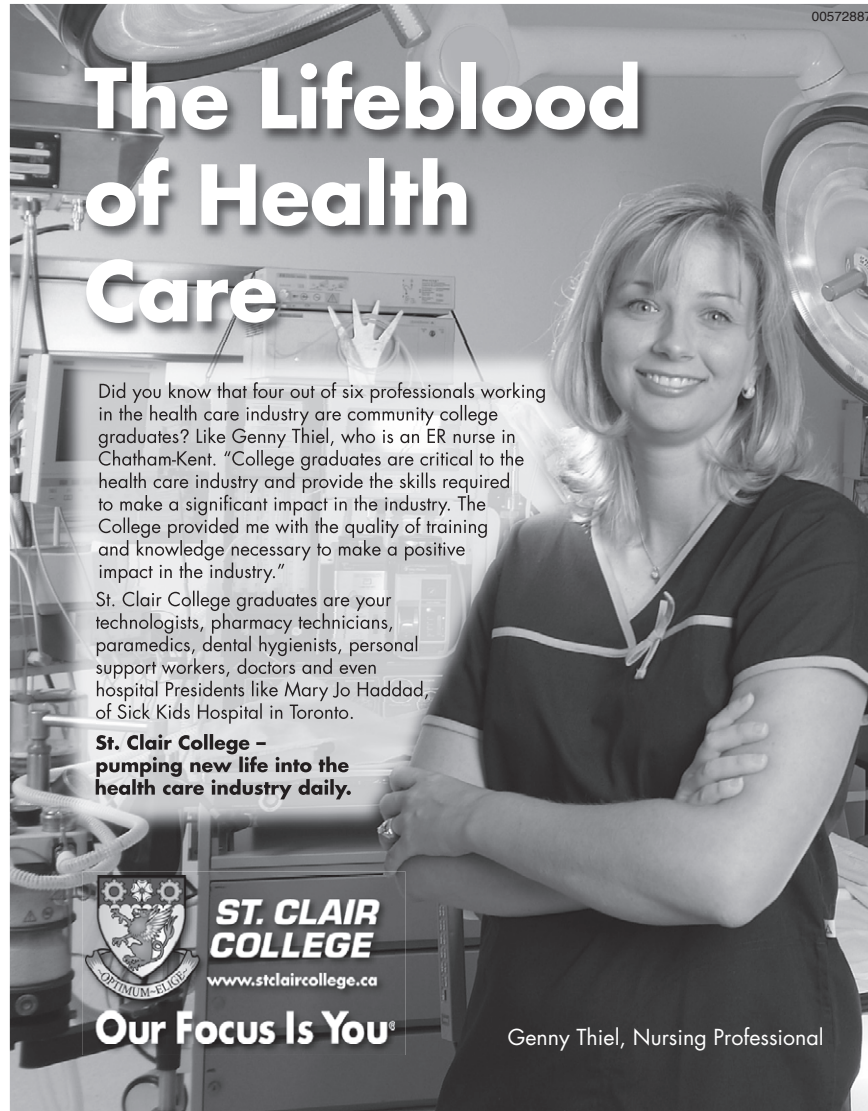
In a 1985 Council of Ontario Universities study, it was estimated that 40 to 90 per cent of primary care physician visits could be handled by nurse practitioners. A recent Ontario study confirms this estimate, demonstrating that nurse practitioners are capable of handling 82.6 per cent of patient care, with the remainder requiring physician referral (Way, 1999). American research also shows that nurse practitioners manage 80 to 90 per cent of what primary care physicians can do without the need for consultation or referral (Hummel & Pirzada, 1994). What these studies demonstrate is the great improvement in access to primary care when nurse practitioners are utilized.



MY HEARTFELT thanks
To You For Your Outstanding Contributions
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Nurses Week 2006



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Windsor Regional Hospital
proudly presents

Congratulations are extended to:

Elaine Chauvin, Floor Leader
Sandra Renaud, Team Player
Amie Layson, Front Line Nurse

and to the following Windsor Regional Team Award nominees:

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