

MEMBERS' VOICES: February 1 – April 30, 2012
Speaking out for Health: Speaking out for Nursing

SUBMITTED BY: Jennifer Johnston – President, Windsor-Essex Chapter – Region 1

Policy/Political Activity

-On Friday February 3rd, The Honourable Deb Matthews Minister of Health and Long Term-Care presented the McGuinty's government action plan to transform healthcare at a luncheon in Windsor. Many members of the Windsor-Essex (W-E) Chapter attended, including students. The Executive Committee supported strong RNAO representation by buying a table of 8 and inviting members to attend. The event was a great opportunity to network with local politicians, and influential members of the W-E Community.

-On Monday February 6th, chapter members attended the Amherstburg Town Council Meeting to support a local political action initiative. Spearheaded by W-E chapter member & Amherstburg Town Councillor Carolyn Davies – many concerned citizens were advocating to halt the practice of fluoridating the municipal drinking supply. Experts provided evidence-based presentations and local residents gave testimonials. RNAO W-E chapter members attended this meeting to show their support and add to the debate. After much discussion, the Amherstburg Town Council voted to stop fluoridating their public water supply until further notice.

-Thursday March 1st, two members of the W-E chapter Executive attended Queen's Park Day. Veronika Pulley and Kim Miller represented the chapter at this exciting event. They reported back about the excitement and challenge of meeting with MPPs. That night Jennifer Johnston also co-chaired the Chapters Presidents' Meeting with Janet Hunt from Middlesex-Elgin. The following day, Jennifer and Veronika also attended the Assembly Meeting.

-Members of the Windsor-Essex Chapter were invited to meet with MPP Teresa Piruzza at her constituency office in Windsor. This meeting is set for mid April and chapter members plan to highlight content from the RNAO Creative Vibrant Communities Platform and advocate for ways to positively influence the health of local residences.

-The Windsor-Essex Chapter Executive and RNAO Region 1 Rep Jacquie Stephens are also collaborating with Chapter Presidents in Sarnia-Lambton and Chatham-Kent to connect with all local MPPs. Invitations for "Take Your MPP to Work Day" are to be sent, along with copies of the Creating Vibrant Communities Platform.

Media Communications

-The W-E Chapter Executive is excited to announce that we have elected Mercedes Phalavong to a newly created position as our interim Social Media Officer. Mercedes will be working to expand the chapter's social media presence.

-In early March, a W-E Executive sub-committee was formed to meet with representatives from the Windsor Star to commence planning for the Nursing Week Special Edition Section. Each year for the past 8 years, our chapter has worked collaboratively with the Windsor Star to organize a multi-page newspaper spread - highlighting the importance of nurses and the nursing profession to our community. The colour pictures and skilfully written articles showcase the dedication local nurses display to their clients and the healthcare team.

-Plans were also set in motion for the 5th annual Lois A. Fairley Community Service Award. In tribute to Lois' exemplary nursing life, the W-E Chapter works closely with the Fairley Family to promote this award each year. This award was developed to honour a nursing nominee who has shown

dedication to the art of nursing. The awards ceremony is to take place at the Hospice of Windsor and Essex County on May 2, 2012 at 11am.

Member Services

-On Friday March 2nd, W-E Chapter's Executive Membership Officer - Kelly Lawrenson was invited to provide local public health nurses with a presentation about RNAO. The presentation was well-received.

-On Saturday March 31st, the W-E Chapter organized an exciting workshop in collaboration with the Independent Practice Nurses Interest Group and the Occupational Health Nursing Interest Group entitled, "Pearls & Perils". This aim of the workshop was to provide local nurses with basic knowledge and a better understanding of how to start up their very own independent practice. The presentations were informative to all and the W-E Chapter would like to thank both interest groups for their keen support.

-The W-E Chapter is also thrilled to report that our newly created Facebook FanPage has 27 followers to date!

-The W-E Chapter continues to successfully support two websites, including both the RNAO Chapters and www.windsorsexrnao.org. The latter has received over 7,700 page views and over 4,300 distinct visitors!!!

Recruitment and Retention

-On Monday March 26th, W-E Executive Committee Members Pat McKay and Kelly Lawrenson attended the University of Windsor Nursing Student Career Fair. Pat and Kelly set-up an eye-catching display booth and provided RNAO materials to all attendees. Thanks Pat and Kelly for your dedication! Much appreciation also goes to Carrie Scott from RNAO Home Office for supplying our chapter with these materials and also to Jody Smith for her amazing ongoing support.

-The W-E Chapter worked with Home Office to arrange that Region 1 LTC Best Practice Coordinator Beverly Faubert could set-up a spectacular display table on Wednesday April 11th at the Erie St. Clair & South West LHIN Falls Prevention Best Practice Collaborative Conference in London, Ontario. Her display table included oodles of great RNAO Best Practice Guideline reference materials for the over 150 attendees. Thank you Bev for attending!

Student Representation

-The W-E Chapter is thrilled to have the support of committed nursing students on our Executive and involved in chapter initiatives. A big thank you to Crystal Hepburn (4th year) and Cheryl Kennedy (1st year), for their enthusiasm, excellent input and assistance with chapter activities.

Emerging Issues

-It was brought to the Chapter's attention that horizontal violence and abusive behaviours between BScN, RPN and PSW students have been occurring at the local college. The W-E Chapter Executive is committed to preventing and managing violence, and is brainstorming ways to support healthy learning and working environments for students. The Chapter plans to work with the Nursing Student Council and Faculty to host a future event promoting professional collaboration amongst the three student groups.