Canadian Nursing Informatics Association

XCNIA

The CNIA Newsblast delivers informatics news from Canada and around the world to our members and subscribers.

Greetings from incoming President - Tracie Risling.

As the summer begins to draw to a close, I hope that the past couple of months have provided an opportunity for rest and reconnection. As we continue to try to manage the ongoing global impacts of the pandemic, nurses remain under immense pressure across the full continuum of our professional practice. Even as mandatory vaccination calls increase, our national trajectory for the remainder of the year is unclear. I welcome the opportunity to step into the presidency of the Canadian Nursing Informatics Association during this time, because amidst the uncertainty there is a new clarity across the country about the importance of nursing and nursing informatics. Nursing informaticians are no strangers to change and evolution, and the complex skills required to navigate this specialty have never been more in need or applicable than they are now. During the next two years CNIA will be enacting our new strategic plan, advocating for nurses and patients in an accelerated digital age. If you are not yet a member of our organization, consider joining us as we work to position nurses as key leaders in the new age of digital health.

Profiling CNIA Board Members

As part of the monthly Newsblasts we are going to profile members of the board so you get some idea about who we are and what we do. We will start this off with Helen Edwards and Lisa Totton - the Co-Directors for Communications. We are using some questions to help focus our thoughts.

Lisa Totton

How did you start your career in nursing? What first drew you to informatics?

Nursing was not actually my first career after High School. I honestly wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but my brother was in his 3rd year of Computer Science at the University of New Brunswick (UNB) and was really enjoying it. He was especially enthusiastic about the co-op program, and since it would allow me to gain experience and help pay for tuition, I decided it was worth a try. I enjoyed the program, but when I graduated in 2006 it was with the realization that what I'm passionate about is helping others. During that time, I also joined Weight Watchers and lost 65 pounds, and decided that I wanted to learn how to help others be healthy. In 2007 I applied for UNB's accelerated BN program with the vague hope that my IT skills might still be useful at some point in my future career. I was accepted into the program, and after the first few courses, I had the realization that I was MEANT to be a nurse. This is where I belonged.

What was your first role in informatics?

I was fortunate to obtain a permanent position at my local hospital immediately after graduation as a bedside RN on a Family Practice / Cardiac Step-Down unit. Unfortunately, a back injury led me to leave bedside nursing 8 months later, and I have been working in informatics ever since. My first Nursing Informatics role was as a Business Analyst with the hospital's IT department, supporting their Electronic Health Record system (Meditech), along with several other clinical applications. I really enjoyed that role as it allowed me to learn an enormous amount about these applications and provided the opportunity to work with a wide variety of people in other areas of the organization.

What is your current role and what is the focus of the role?

I am currently a Business Intelligence Analyst for Horizon Health Network. In this role I am responsible for creating visually engaging, interactive reports based on hospital data in the Microsoft Power BI application. This role is a fantastic fit for my background as it allows me to combine the skills I acquired during my Computer Science program with my Nursing background and my knowledge of our Electronic Health Record system.

What key messages do you have for nurses interested in working in the informatics field

The thing I enjoyed the most from my Computer Science program was learning computer programming. It's super fun, a useful skill, and aligns incredibly well with the problem solving we employ as Nurses. If you are a student and have a chance to take a programming elective, take that chance. Otherwise, there are a ton of free learning experiences available online. Canada Learning Code is an organization I have volunteered with in the past; they provide a variety wonderful free learning experiences.

Helen Edwards

How did you start your career in nursing? What first drew you to informatics?

I graduated from a community college (CEGEP) nursing diploma program in Quebec in the 1970s and after moving to Ontario in early 1980s, worked at SickKids Hospital in Toronto for 40 years, retiring from there just 2 months ago. During my career I continued my academic preparation, completing undergraduate and graduate degrees. As nurses we collect, analyze, and communicate patient assessments, using their data to adjust care. We rarely acknowledge that this is "doing" informatics. My interest in informatics grew as I participated more in technology acquisitions and implementations.

What was your first role in informatics?

In the early 2000s I led a project to implement new physiological monitors and patient monitoring practices across the hospital. This first formal informatics role was followed by being the liaison between nursing and IT for the implementation of a new electronic health record. In November 2003 I was named the Director of Nursing Informatics and over the years expanded my portfolio to include more operational and strategic responsibilities.

What is your current role and what is the focus of the role?

After successfully implementing a new health information system (Epic) in 2018 I was promoted to Chief Nursing Informatics Officer. My responsibilities included operational oversight of a number of clinical application/informatics teams/staff; translating clinical business needs to determine the best path for new technologies or optimizing existing systems – often through revising or cementing processes and accountabilities; designing workflow in the context of technologies; addressing patient safety issues that could be addressed/ prevented through informatics.

Although I retired at the end of May this year, I continue to be on the CNIA Board and support the University of Toronto Master of Health Informatics program, and I have started some consulting work.

What key messages do you have for nurses interested in working in the informatics field?

Recognize that you "do" informatics every single day, even if you don't recognize that is what you are doing. Participate in activities or forums where you can influence the introduction or improvement of systems that you use. Nurses are in a unique position to provide insights into patient journeys and how the various disciplines interact when providing care to a patient

patient journeys and how the various disciplines interact when providing care to a patient. Your voices are important and can lead to improvements in patient care and clinical operations.

Calling Nurse Leaders to Participate in a Research Study

Nurse Leaders' Self Perceptions of Informatics Competency: Development and Psychometric Validation of the Informatics Competency Self-Assessment for Canadian Nurse Leaders (ICS CNL)

*Nurse Leaders with human and financial management responsibilities and working in a clinical setting (hospital, homecare, community care, clinic) are invited to participate in this research study. Nurse leaders may have recognized senior leadership titles (e.g., Chief Nurse Executive, Director, Manager, Supervisor) but may also be individuals with significant decision making authority in a clinical environment (e.g., Advanced Practice Nurse, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Nurse Educator, Nurse Informatician).

This study aims to:
- Develop the Informatics Self-Assessment for Canadian Nurse Leaders (ICS-CNL) based on the Nurse Leader informatics competencies in Canada.
- Determine Nurse Leaders' self-perceived informatics competencies.
- Assess the validity and internal consistency of the ICS-CNL.

Participation is VOLUNTARY. To view the study information letter and access the online survey, click the link below. This survey is anonymous and takes 10-15 minutes to complete.

https://redcap.ualberta.ca/surveys/?s=MLYFKX8RRE

If you have questions about the survey or research study, or issues with completing the survey, please contact lead investigator, Dr. Manal Kleib at: manal.kleib@ualberta.ca.

A Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta has reviewed the study plan (Pro00096334). If you have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call (780) 492 2615. This office is independent of the researchers.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to participate in this research study!

July 6, 2021- TORONTO – Digital Health Canada today announced the availability of Red Hat enterprise open source software training modules for Digital Health Canada members interested in accumulating Continuing Education (CE) units or hours to be used towards Certified Professional in Healthcare Information and Management Systems – Canada (CPHIMS-CA)certification renewal.

As a Digital Health Canada Continuing Education Provider, Red Hat education offerings have met meticulous standards for curriculum quality and value. Digital Health Canada is pleased to be able to offer members these valuable training modules in partnership with Red Hat, the world's leading provider of open source solutions.

"Organizations like Red Hat understand that digital health professionals need continuing education to stay at the top of their field and grow the profession," said Mark Casselman, CEO, Digital Health Canada. "This new offering will benefit members looking for both CPHIMS-CA certification renewal and continuous professional growth and development opportunities."

Adds Sara Jost, Chief Healthcare Strategist, Red Hat Canada: "The pandemic has elevated the importance of digital healthcare and leaders want to expand their knowledge of the technology options that can amplify innovation. Our training introduces technologies that offer a flexible and customized approach to interoperability, artificial intelligence machine learning, application development, automation and security."

Please see an example of Red Hat's work with the World Health Organization (WHO) highlighting how we are helping educate health workers.

Red Hat offers flexible training options, real-world content, and validation of skills through hands-on certification exams, allowing learners to maximize their skills and enabling organizations to get the most out of their technology investments, including the latest product releases.

Learn more about Red Hat and other Digital Health Canada Continuing Education Providers here.

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Have an informatics item of interest to our members or subscribers?
Send it along to: communications@cnia.ca