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Chapter 1

2010

1.1 September

2010 CNSA Bylaw Proposal Snapshot! (2010-09-29 14:20)

Author: Bryanth Sunga, RN, BSN, CNSA Vice President 2009-2010, [1]vicepresident@cnsa.org



ID I

- You will no longer need to have a COCR representative board member and instead will be able to select anybody who see fit that will represent your chapter at the meetings.

ID II

- The Council of Chapter Representatives Meetings will be now known as Membership Meetings.

ID III

- We will now be changing the COCR-North and COCR-South position titles to Membership Director-North and Membership Director-South.

ID IV

- Since there will no longer Council of Chapter Representatives, they will not be apart of the decision process in filling vacancies on the board.

ID V

- The Membership Director-North and Membership Director-South positions will now assume the duties that COCR-North and COCR-South positions previously held.

ID VI

- We will be adding the Image of Nursing and Cultural Awareness committees as permanent standing committees on the board.

ID VII

- The Breakthrough to Nursing director shall serve the liaison between the Image of Nursing and Cultural Awareness committees to the Board of Directors.

ID VIII

- The Membership Directors will assume the role on the Nominations and Elections committee that the former COCR co-chairs used to hold.
- Also the chairs for the Image of Nursing committee and the Committee on Cultural Awareness will be elected positions.

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ANA California Corner (2010-09-29 14:26)

ANA\California Corner: Elissa Brown, President ANA\California



It is an honor to be writing this piece for the CNSA Newsletter, Range of Motion. As

President of the American Nurses Association\California (ANA\C), I can tell you all that we feel very close to CNSA. Just as CNSA is part of the National Student Nurses Association, so ANA\C a part of the American Nurses Association. It seems a normal transition for members of CNSA to join ANA\California when you become an RN. We look forward to working more closely together with CNSA to facilitate transitions, from CNSA to ANA\C and from being a student to being an RN. You are invited to attend our ANA\C meetings and events.

In this initial article from ANA\C, I thought I would share some general information about ANA\California and ANA. Much of this comes from the websites for ANA\

California (anacalifornia.org) and the ANA (nursingworld.org), which you can visit.

The American Nurses Association California

ANA\C's Vision Statement is: ANA\C, a constituent member of ANA, leads the profession of nursing in fulfilling its commitment to excellence in practice, education, research, and social policy. And its Mission Statement is: The mission of ANA\C is to optimize nursing's contribution to the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. As nurses, this primary commitment to society guides and shapes our efforts to foster nursing practice standards, promote professional development, conduct and use research, influence public policy, and enhance professional practice environment. We publish a quarterly newsletter, the Nursing Voice, also available through our website..

ANA\C conducts its RN Lobby Days every year. The 2011 event is April 4th and 5th in Sacramento. "The goal of this conference is to 'open up new avenues of thinking as to how nurses can participate in the legislative process and support the nursing agenda throughout the state of California'". We are very active in the legislative and policy arenas and our very qualified staff are incredibly knowledgeable and skilled in those arenas. You can check our website for more up to date information. We also rely on our members and others— with special appreciation of nursing students, to let us know when there are issues of concern. Also part of ANA\C are: The California Association of Psychiatric\Mental health Nurses in Advanced Practice (CAPNAP) is an Affiliate of ANA\C, and, in conjunction with ANA\C, has been the force behind an APRN Summit group that is creating a White Paper on the future of Advanced Practice Nursing in California; and The Golden State Nursing Foundation, that is uniquely California. Started by a group of nurses in Northern California the foundation was specifically created to offer [1]scholarships to nurses and to [2]receive grants from outside donations to conduct and pursue activities consistent with the mission of GSNF. Besides awarding scholarships, the founders had a vision to create a [3]Nurse Museum. The GSNF Mission is "To promote and provide programs for professional and educational advancement of nursing so that better nursing care may be provided to all people." Remember that ANA\California is the professional organization open to all nurses. It is recommended that RNs join ANA\C and, if they can, their specialty organizations. That enables you to receive up to date general and specialty knowledge and information, and participate with your colleagues in moving Nursing forward. The American Nurses Association—of which ANA\California is a Constituent Member Association: The ANA mission statement is: "Nurses advancing our profession to improve health for all". The American Nurses Association (ANA) is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's nearly 3.1 million registered nurses (RNs) through its constituent member nurses associations (CMAs), its organizational affiliates and its workforce advocacy affiliate, the Center for American Nurses. The structure is such that each state is a constituent member of ANA; in addition to the states there are: the Federal Nurses Association, Guam and the Virgin Islands. The ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the rights of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public. The CMAs determine much of the direction of the ANA through the ANA House of Delegates, which comprises delegates sent by each state,

apportioned according to each state membership count. "..., members receive a subscription to The American Nurse (TAN), the bimonthly publication of the ANA, as well as a subscription to the monthly American Nurse Today. Members receive discounts on various credentialing and conference fees and discounts on insurance, i.e., disability, life... (and malpractice) insurance through ANA. Individual members can apply for an ANA Visa credit card, and also obtain travel and shopping benefits... Additionally, ANA maintains the web site, NursingWorld.org. Coupling these benefits with the CMA benefits offered makes membership in ANA a strong value..." ANA is the strongest voice for the nursing profession. It is headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland. *Although one needs to be an RN to join ANA, students can now sign up to access the "Members Only" areas of NursingWorld.org for free. You may do this by e-mailing your name, school, and current year in school to [4]students@ana.org and a promo code will be sent immediately to you. If you are doing a paper about Nursing , please check the ANA \C and ANA websites to research your topic(s). Also available is a video," [5]Discover Your ANA", on the ANA web site, a short film about what ANA is and how we work for nurses. Please check the nursingworld.org website for more information about ANA's Statement of Purpose, and its structure. Just some of what ANA does: "ANA successfully champions professional nursing excellence through standards, code of ethics and professional development, such as credentialing and lifelong learning. The goal of ANA is to develop and disseminate the cornerstone work of ANA, such as standards, guidelines, principles, Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements, Nursing's Social Policy Statement to the public and the profession". Standards are authoritative statements by which the nursing profession describes the responsibilities for which its practitioners are accountable. Standards reflect the values and priorities of the profession and provide direction for professional nursing practice and a framework for the evaluation of this practice. They also define the nursing profession's accountability to the public and the outcomes for which registered nurses are responsible" A specific example of a position ANA has taken: Health Care Worker Safety: Position: "Nurses have the right to a safe and secure workplace in which to provide quality patient care. The American Nurses Association (ANA) is working to protect nurses from workplace injury and infection in a variety of ways, including lobbying for legislative and regulatory initiatives and adequate resources to ensure a workplace that is free from avoidable physical dangers". *Again, students are invited to visit our ANA\C website, ask questions, and attend our ANA\C meetings and events. FYI: ANA\C is often contacted, with sometimes very little notice, to send representatives to healthcare reform hearings, political events, rallies, health fairs, and more. When we are asked to present testimony, we look for those who can and are willing to do so, and we shall help with preparing the individual RNs and students to present. We have often sought students to be part of the events, and perhaps this is one of the areas where we can collaborate more; perhaps share a list of who is available for what. Thank you for the privilege of being able to be part of your Newsletter. ANA\California looks forward to our continued working together and enhancing our partnership. Elissa Brown Contact information: Address of the American Nurses Association\California 1121 L. Street Suite 409 Sacramento, CA 95814 Phone: 916-447-0225 Fax: 916-442-4394 Website: anacalifornia.org American Nurses Association California [6]anac@anacalifornia.org Address of the American Nurses Association (ANA): 8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 400, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3492 Website: nursingworld.org

1. <http://www.goldenstatenursingfoundation.org/scholarships.html>
2. <http://www.goldenstatenursingfoundation.org/grants.html>
3. <http://www.goldenstatenursingfoundation.org/museum.html>
4. <mailto:students@ana.org>
5. <http://www.nursingworld.org/EspeciallyForYou/Educators/ANAMovie.aspx>
6. <mailto:anac@anacalifornia.org>

CNSA Annual Convention (2010-09-29 14:35)

Author: Callan Lisker, RN, BSN, CNSA Convention Director, 2009-2010, [1]conventiondirector@cnsa.org



Welcome to the 2010 CNSA Annual Convention on October 15-17th at the Ontario Convention Center in Ontario, CA. The theme for this Convention is, "The Many Hats of Nursing: A Wonderland of Opportunity!" This particular convention is a weekend long event, which is aimed at educating nursing students and easing the transition from being a student to a professional nurse, with the use of advocacy, activism and leadership. The CNSA Convention is available to Nursing Students, Pre-Nursing Students, Registered Nurses, Nursing Faculty and Nurse Leaders committed to our future nursing workforce.

Attendees are provided with an educational experience as they become immersed in the House of Delegates where attendees may listen to the Bylaws, Resolution hearings, Candidate's speeches and vote and make important decisions.

This convention enables attendees to hear phenomenal keynote speakers and become enlightened and inspired to continue with their commitment to nursing. Our CNSA Annual State Convention will include nursing icons, such as Rebecca Patton, 2006-2010 President of the American Nurses Association and Dr. Courtney Lyder, Dean at UCLA School of Nursing.

For those nursing students who are getting ready to take the NCLEX, an NCLEX review is offered by Hurst on Friday morning. The Hurst Review is followed by an interview skills workshop, which focuses on resume writing and improving your interview skills. The CNSA Convention also offers attendees with the opportunity to have their resumes reviewed on Saturday by nurse leaders and recruiters.

Throughout this weekend, attendees have the ability to walk through the exhibit hall. This exhibit hall is filled with various nurse recruiters, nursing organizations, as well as hospitals throughout the State of California. Come prepared with your resume and business cards, and meet, interview and network with potential employers and vendors committed to helping you succeed.

Make sure to bring your Mad Hatters Hat for our "Mad Hatters Tea Party" happening on Friday night! A Kaplan course will be auctioned off at this "Mad Hatters Tea Party" to the winner of the best looking hat!! So come prepared!!

Another amazing opportunity that is offered at convention is the chance for individuals to run for various positions on the CNSA board of directors. I feel as though my position as Convention Director, has taught me a lot about team work, organization, as well as contributing to my passion and commitment to the field of nursing. Refer to the CNSA website or any of the current members of the board of directors for information on various board positions.

Not only is this Convention educational and informative, it also provides a wonderful opportunity to get to

know and become close with other students as well as other cohorts. I would highly recommend branching out during this convention to enhance your knowledge and gain a closer relationship with other members from your School of Nursing. Experiences like these will be ones that will last a lifetime and will be remembered and valued.

Callan Lisker RN, BSN

CNSA Convention Director

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A Time to Serve (2010-09-29 14:37)

Author: Michelle Irving, SN, BSN, CNSA Convention Director, 2009-2010, [1]communityhealthdirector@cnsa.org



First, I would like to thank CNSA Advisors, CNSA Board of Directors, and the Community Health committee members for providing me the chance to experience this amazing opportunity to serve as your Community Health Director. During this year, I have learned a great deal about nursing leadership and the importance of serving. Through my travels to CoCr Meetings South and North, I have had the opportunity to hear chapter members speak about their various community service projects. I was impressed and inspired by the hard work that each chapter has accomplished every day in the name of nursing.

I hope each chapter was able to get involved in various community projects and take ownership of the Disaster Preparedness Community Health Project. With the wake of natural disasters around the USA and internationally, I felt that this project would serve as a chance for each of us to become more involved in community service. During this experience, I have met so many wonderful individuals who have inspired

me to be more active in community service locally and internationally. I am grateful for everyone who participated in community outreach on campus, community events, and also in statewide fundraiser “Let Your \$Change Be the Change in the World,” in providing aid to Haitian nursing students. It has been a pleasure to serve as your Community Health Director this past year.

Although, I wanted to do more in my position I hope the CNSA Community Health page served as a good resource for all of you. We each have a role to play in our communities. I hope all of you experienced the importance of serving on your campus and in your communities this past year. I am so happy each of you are dedicated to nursing, now as a professional nurse, I have seen the importance that serving in the community has in enhancing your professional growth in field.

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Icebreakers (2010-09-29 14:40)

Author: Angela Schwab, RN, BSN, CNSA President 2009-2010, President@cnsa.org



Starting a new semester is never an easy thing. Between getting to know new instructors, resetting schedules to accommodate a new syllabus, and counting the number of care plans that must be completed before finals, it can be a very stressful time. One of the things I always enjoyed about a new semester was the icebreakers on the first day of class. Most of the time this consisted of getting up in front of the class and telling a little bit about myself. The first time I did this I broke into a sweat and had no idea what to say. With each semester the self introductions became easier. Eventually I got to the point where I could introduce myself with confidence.

One of the more memorable icebreakers that I participated in was in English class. The instructor asked us to introduce the person sitting behind us. This seemed like an easy task, except we had to do it while knowing absolutely nothing about them. We were not allowed to introduce the person if we already knew them, and we were not given any time to prepare for the introduction. We had to give the person’s name, major, and a hobby based on what little information we gathered in the few minutes waiting for class to begin. As you can imagine, the introductions were hilarious. The memorable part of the exercise was when the person being introduced gave the real information. At the end of the class we all realized how little we know about someone by looking at them.

Though humorous icebreakers make for a good time, the one I always liked best was “why did you choose nursing?” It is always interesting to hear why people choose to dedicate their life to helping others. The answer I remember hearing most was a variation of a story where an awesome nurse made an impact on someone’s life. That impact was the inspirational factor on why these students chose to become nurses. Every

day that I am involved in patient care, these inspirational stories are with me.

The first week of the new school year has passed and the focus is now on learning all the vital information to get through the semester. What you may not realize is that a priceless education may have been gained that first day of class during the icebreaker. After all that is how I gained confidence by introducing myself, learned that I should never make assumptions and became aware of what a huge impact nurses can have on someone's life.

Image of Nursing: The Power of a Smile (2010-09-29 14:43)

Author: Kimberly Vaughan, SN, BSN, CNSA Image of Nursing Committee Chair, [1]iondir@cnsa.org



Never underestimate the power of a smile. Something seemingly so simple to you can make a substantial impact in someone else's day. As nursing students it is important to not only smile, but also be aware of the impact that facial expression can have, which will subsequently influence your effect as a nurse. There are many definitions of a smile but my favorite, and the most appropriate in this case is smile: a pleasant or agreeable appearance or look. When thinking about your image as nurses there are many components including your appearance (clothes, shoes, hair, etc.) the way you talk and what you say. Promoting a positive image in your everyday life is also part of your image. Smiling may seem like a "no-brainer", but it is not as miniscule as one may think.

On my morning rounds for a 12 hour shift as a CNA I knocked, walked into my first patient room, smiled, introduced myself and continued with my morning routine (performing vital signs, checking in on the patient, updating the board, and checking the room). Doing this just seemed normal to me. I then moved on to the rest of my patients and continued the same routine.

Later, when I was checking in on my first patient, an elderly woman who was diagnosed with lung cancer, she called me over and said she wanted to talk to me if I had time. I did, and asked her what was on her mind. She then proceeded to tell me that when I greeted her that morning, said hello, and smiled, it brightened her day. She said often when people came into her room to check on her, to give her meds, or to talk to her about her illness, they were so focused on those tasks, they rarely remembered to smile. When I came in that morning and smiled it made her feel important, made her feel that I cared and she felt like it would be a "good day". She told me "sometimes it is the little things that matter," and I cannot agree more.

When we are busy with our days, trying to complete our tasks on time, finishing our charting and thinking about the duties at hand it is easy to forget to smile. I have always tried to make a point to smile in elevators when I see people, walking down the hallways, and especially when I am interacting with patients. However, hearing this from a patient made me acutely aware that sometimes, it really is the little things.

What she told my not only brightened my day as well, but made me realize that in all the other aspects of my busy day, it was something as simple as a smile that made this woman feel comforted and cared for.

As students, as CNAs, as RNs, and as people in the community we can improve our image with something as simple as a smile. All of the other aspects of your image are of course important but sometimes it is about getting back to the basics. Remember that no matter what your day brings you, how much stress you have piled on your shoulders, take a deep breath, look at, and smile at those around you. It will help to make you feel confident and joyful as well as possibly brightening someone else's day. Never underestimate your smile and the effect it can have on those around you. Sometimes the "little things" can have the deepest impact.

Kimberly Vaughan
Image of Nursing Ad-Hoc Committee Chair

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Just another typical day in the life of a nurse (2010-09-29 14:45)

Author: Kaley Ferreira SN, BSN, CNSA Secretary/Treasurer, 2009-2010, [1]sectreas@cnsa.org



Every nursing student or nurse occasionally has one of those crazy days – one of those days when you just want to curl up in a ball and ignore all the call lights and beeping IVs. Well, I had one of those days recently at my externship. It seemed like everything that could go wrong went wrong and then some, and between each catastrophe, call lights were obnoxiously blinking and patients were continuously calling out for a nurse. Everything seemed to be spinning out of control around me while I tried desperately to hold on to my sanity, and at the same time, I tried frantically to keep a straight face so no one could see that this little extern was trying her hardest not to run screaming out of the building.

Yeah, it was one of those days – one of those hair-pulling, gut-wrenching, exhausting days. Every time I fixed one problem, something else would pop up that needed my immediate attention. Every time I thought I had a moment to take a breath, a patient would throw up, a colostomy bag would burst, or the little old man in bed 6 would decide to be a combative mess yet again.

But, just as it seemed like I could never handle the stress – just as I began to think that nursing may have been the wrong choice for me – I got reminded of the reason I chose this profession, and it seems like

every time things get out of control, I am lucky enough to get one of those reminders.

It was finally quittin' time, and I was ready to bolt for the door. But, before I leave, I always check to see if there is any last thing I can do for my patients before I go. Believe me, I did not really want to do any last minute tasks, but I knew my patients deserved it. So, I walked into my most needy patient's room first since he was the one that was constantly calling and always had the most requests, and yes, I was dreading the demands that he may make when I walked into that room. I told him I was leaving soon so I wanted to see if he needed anything before I left. Then, that's when it happened. This man, who all day seemed to be angry at life and anyone who came into his room, looked at me with such disappointment in his eyes. He told me he didn't want me to go. He said I was one of his favorite nurses because I always answered his calls right away and made sure he was always comfortable and had all his needs met.

He didn't know that every time the call light had gone off that day, I cringed a little bit. He didn't know that all I wanted to do at that moment was go home and relax for awhile without having to worry about anyone else. All he knew was that I had taken care of him all day and that I had done it well, and that's all he would ever know about that day.

Things may get crazy, and you may want to give up at times. But, you always need to remember the reasons you chose this profession. And, sometimes it may take some reminding by that one patient that looks forward to having you as a nurse. So, look for the smiles and the kind words when it seems like all that's left is craziness and anger, because those smiles are always there too. It may be a kind word from the patient that snarls at everyone when they walk in the room, or it may be the patient that when you transfer him to another unit, he says as you go to walk away, "No. You stay. I want to make sure things get done around here." No matter where you look, you will always find those awesome reminders of why you chose to dedicate your life to serving others.

So, that's why I chose nursing – to make an impact on others lives on a day to day basis. Now, I ask you, Why did YOU choose nursing?

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Life's Opportunities (2010-09-29 14:47)

Author: Kelly Bowker RN, BSN, CNSA Legislative Director, 2009-2010, [1]legdirector@cnsa.org



We have all heard the motto "everything happens for a reason," but when I really think about the chance encounters life has thrown at me, it's crazy how my life path can

has changed for the better with a simple “hello.”

My future nursing career would not have been had it not been for a short conversation at Starbucks. A woman noticed my anatomy book and reminisced about her experience with the course. I was actually studying to become a dental hygienist at the time. It turned out she was a hygienist and truly wished she had become a nurse. She told me all the pro’s and con’s and was very convincing. It got me thinking. Later that day, my mother and I decided nursing would be more of a challenge with much more potential for growth and, most of all, happiness.

During a clinical rotation an elderly man on hospice care saw me as I walked by him smiling. He motioned me to come inside. After putting on the appropriate contact precaution gear, I entered his room to see what he needed. I believe in his confused state he had mistaken me for someone else, but in a muffled low voice he gave me some really great advice. He told me to take every opportunity that comes my way; never turn down an offer to do something new, as it will be scary but worth it; make family number one; say “I love you” whenever you wish; always do your best and don’t be lazy. These are simple things that have been said to me numerous times; however, coming from a man close to death, I took it to heart.

I thought of him last summer when I saw the forms to run for the state board. I knew it would be difficult to add another responsibility to my list, but I also knew I would be more disappointed had I not tried. So I ran, was elected, have been working hard, and learned so much along the way. Being on this board has been a wonderful experience that I am so glad I didn’t miss out on. I plan on always reaching for more and striving to become the best nurse possible.

I have had some of the most memorable, life-altering experiences just by smiling at strangers. Just the other day I was at a restaurant and smiled at a woman who walked by. She stopped and asked if I would take a picture for her. We ended up chatting, and, long story short, she has been a nurse for 24 years and has her own company, at which she offered me an internship.

People may say it is luck, but I know it is more than that. Having an open mind, a good work ethic and an optimistic outlook have never steered me wrong. So next time you make eye contact, whether it be with a friendly or scowling face, smile; it never hurts.

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San Diego State University Global Medical Brigade (2010-09-29 14:49)

Author: Summer Buchanan, SN, BSN, [1]buchanansummer@yahoo.com

San Diego State University Global Medical Brigade
Honduras 2010
By Summer Buchanan, SDSU 2nd semester BSN student

In January, I was able to travel to southern Honduras with twenty-five fellow San Diego State University students and four U.S. doctors through Global Brigades, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing sustainable living and health care to communities in developing countries. Having previously lived in Central America, I know firsthand, that adequate health care is not readily available in this area of the world to those in need so I jumped at the opportunity to return to Honduras and offer assistance and acceptable medical services to the local communities.

When we arrived on Monday afternoon, we were greeted by Wendy, our Honduran group leader. Knowing how exhausted we were by the long flight, she welcomed us with a warm smile and promised a warm meal as soon as we arrived to our base camp, which was in the town of El Paraiso (Danli). After a 45 minute bus ride, we made it safe and sound to base camp and quickly received the itinerary of the entire week: travelling to three rural towns with limited resources and providing medical care to several hundred people. Enthused yet tired we enjoyed our delicious meal and headed to bed to get ready for our busy week ahead.

As a first semester SDSU nursing student with limited clinical experience, I was quickly amazed at my ability to assist the healthcare team. My fellow students and I were able to assist the medical doctors and a local Honduran dentist in everything from triage and assessment (similar to an ED experience) to assisting the doctors with wound care. The first day, I teamed up with Dr. Fernando and his dental hygienist in providing fluoride treatments, oral hygiene education, and tooth extractions for many people who had NEVER in their entire life, seen a dentist or received proper oral hygiene treatment.

The second and third days were much more intense, as I was able to utilize my nursing skills to help over 500 patients in 2 days! I was able to communicate with the patients on a personal and trusting level, as they shared with me their grief regarding various ailments, from chest pain to intestinal parasites as well as gynecological and reproductive concerns. It humbled me to see several middle aged women feel so embarrassed yet grateful to receive medical care and supplies for ailments that are usually cured by a drug-store run here in the US. Seeing their faces of relief made me understand even more how fortunate I am to help in the healing process of such wonderful men and women from all walks of life.

As our trip came to an end, I was saddened to have to say goodbye to such a rich and spirited culture. This trip not only granted me wonderful memories that will stay with me for a lifetime, it also reinforced my decision in making international and community nursing a priority in my career.

Figure 1 The first brigade day as I assisted Dr. Fernando in a tooth extraction for a little Honduran girl who was so fearless as we gave her a numbing agent.

Figure 3 Third brigade day SDSU brigaders triage over 300 patients

Figure 4 Third brigade day, triage station

Figure 5 Third brigade day, patients wait to hear their name so they can receive their medications that the doctors prescribed.

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Take The Leap (2010-09-29 14:51)

Author: Anna Viet, SN, BSN, CNSA Communications Director, 2009-2010, conventiondirector@cnsa.org



One year ago I was sitting in your shoes at my first CNSA annual convention in Sacramento. After being elected as the president of my local chapter's CNSA/NSNA, I made it a goal for our chapter to attend convention, one way or another. After submitting a proposal to our office of student affairs asking for permission as well as funding, we were approved and ready to go. As much as I encouraged our members to attend, many believed the journey would be too difficult. In the end, there were four adventurous and willing students, including myself, that attended the convention. I volunteered to drive almost seven hours on a Friday after class to arrive at my house in San Jose at around 11:00pm. At 6:00am, we woke up and the four of us drove another two hours to Sacramento. The convention experience was nothing short of amazing. I came to learn that there was an option to run for office after being nominated "from the floor". This meant that any nursing student that was a member of NSNA who attended convention could potentially run for office that weekend. All the person had to do was be nominated by a delegate sitting in the House of Representatives during the designated time slots.

My mind started racing. I asked myself, "could I really do this?" I only knew three people at the entire convention and wondered how could I stand in front of everyone and convince them that I could do that job. After what seemed like hours of contemplating, I bumped into a group of students from California State University, San Marcos. They were really encouraging, supportive and even offered to nominate me from the floor. Because of their reactions to my proposal for running, I decided to take the leap and run for office. I was sure that this was a decision that I would never regret it turned out I was right. Being a member of this year's CNSA board of directors has been an unforgettable experience. I have met so many impressive and accomplished individuals, as well as learned so much more about the profession that I have chosen for my life. I am truly grateful for the little push from the group of San Marcos students who actually became my fellow board members.

So, if you are reading this and are sitting in our convention hall, this is my little push to you. Consider the possibilities and take advantage of this rewarding opportunity. Run for office and let go of all your fears of having too many commitments, being inadequate, or even public speaking and just take the leap. I promise you won't regret it.

Thinking about how you think: The role of stereotypes and biases (2010-09-29 14:52)

Author: Yovannah Chavez, SN, BSN, CNSA Co-CR North, 2009-2010, [1]cocnorth@cnsa.org



In my experiences as a new grad, I've had numerous opportunities to interact with very diverse patient populations. Like each of us, I have had the opportunity to care for adults, children, minorities, the elderly and so on. With each of these populations over time, I have refined the communication style which I use to engage and interact with the patient. Recently, I came across a publication which explored the issues of stereotypes and biases and the potentially hidden role which these play when interacting with patients. Being completely caught off guard, I discovered that we all have stereotypes and biases that even without our awareness have the ability to interfere with the delicate patient-provider relationship.

I found this to be very disheartening as over the next few days while working with patients I continually kept attempting to decipher if I was unconsciously inserting any of my own personal biases when communicating with patients. In working with an elderly Hispanic female, numerous risk factors and culturally significant evidenced-based issues came across my mind. Is thinking in this manner particularly negative? I do not imagine so because as nurses we are taught to think in such a manner.

Ultimately, what I took away from this experience is that there is a large difference between keeping the cultural and social factors in mind when communicating with patients and immediately assuming that all members of a particular population or ethnic background are the same. It can often be a very fine line which distinguishes good practice from unjust stereotyping and bias, therefore I encourage you to evaluate your own biases and think about how you approach patients with different populations.

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Thinking upstream (2010-09-29 14:54)

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Just this past semester, I cared for a patient who presented with severe hypertension. As an overweight individual, his reason for having his health evaluated was due to moderate chest pain which he experienced when performing strenuous physical activity. This phenomenon of seeking care only when the health issue has reached a critical point is seen across the healthcare spectrum and it has not only put a logistic strain on the health care system but a financial one as well. When speaking with him following his evaluation by the physician, I learned that not only was he a smoker but his diet was extremely poor. In beginning to deliver my patient education and in speaking with him of the risk factors and potential health outcomes related to hypertension, I quickly became aware that he had no prior knowledge of how serious of an issue hypertension is or how smoking could affect his heart so poorly. He did admit that he was aware of the repercussions which smoking could have on the health of his lungs, but could not fathom how this could be related to the health of his arteries and so on.

With over a quarter of Americans suffering from at least one type of chronic potentially preventable issue, I must ask why the delivery of preventative education is not more of a prominent focus in our training. We are routinely taught to provide patient education to the patient based on the recommendations and treatments given by the physician but with the incredible need for additional education and reinforcement, it should be our responsibility as providers of care to think upstream and work with our patients to evaluate any potential problems which may be prevalent in the future. With the current state of our health care system, we should take an active role to ensure that we do not contribute to the problem but instead as new nurses entering the field help change the mindset of our profession and think with a more preventative mindset.

Helpful tips to consider:

- Build off of the patient education that you provide based on a physician's treatment and expand upon it to also speak to the patient about how they can reduce their risk for other potentially troublesome health issues (i.e. Preventative health education).
- Try to discover the barriers which may be present that are not allowing the patient to live health lives and suggest strategies for how they can work around them.
- Encourage the patient to bring their family to receive an evaluation of their health to help address potential problems before they may occur.

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BlogBook v0.4,
L^AT_EX 2_ε & GNU/Linux.
<http://www.blogbooker.com>

Edited: February 9, 2013

