

LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

REPORT TO CPNA

SEPTEMBER 2003

The licensed Practical Nurses Association of British Columbia promotes professional excellence and life long learning with strength through a unified voice representing the LPNs of British Columbia.

MEMBERSHIP:

Our membership has been reduced in the last year, but we feel that this is due to the changes in how the Health Care system is operating in our Province. Membership numbers are at present 761. There is an increase in the Association from "New LPNS" and the Student population, which was expected by the Executive given the interest recorded. We continue to operate as a voluntary body, who advocate for the membership. It is very hard to convince the LPNS in BC that they need liability Insurance. They are still of the opinion that they are covered through the Hospital, a concept that was encouraged by the Unions.

FEES:

Our membership fees remain at \$50.00 per calendar year, but will be changed to \$75.00 for the year 2004, as voted at the last AGM. We continue to hold the Liability Insurance, which is paid from the membership fees.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

Our Annual General Meeting was held on April 28th 2003; Marilyn Medeiros jump started our enthusiasm with a presentation on "LPNS at the forefront." We participated in some lively discussions about when we first as individuals realized that we were passionate about nursing or being a nurse and how our passions have sustained us despite our frustrations related to nursing in the work environment and significant challenges for our profession and what is the ideal future scenario for the LPN within the Health Sciences profession.

Marilyn is the principal investigator with co researcher Jan van Doorn in a Licensed Practical Nursing Project Study. The study is supported by a grant from the Okanagan University College and a donation of \$500.00 from the LPNABC.

Our second Presenter Lillian Whitmore from Volunteer Vancouver was equally magnanimous and involved many side discussions with her presentation on "Trends in Volunteerism and Challenges faced by the LPNABC." She pointed out that only 73% of all volunteer hours in Canada are given by only 79% of the Canadian population.

EDUCATION:

The Association issued six (6) Bursaries of \$250 each to Students taking the PN program and upgrading. We now have a total of 10 Public School Programs, 3 Private School Programs and 1 Refresher Program.

We have also bought a Leadership Program, which we will be offering to the Licensed Practical Nurse to help them in their changing roles. I think our next program will be about Liability Insurance and its importance especially with the big shift on Privatization.

As there were many LPNS who missed out on the Ministry funding support last year for the refresher program and upgrading courses, they will hopefully be supported again in this year's budget, according to the Health Planning Ministry.

SCOPE OF PRACTICE:

The Health Planning Ministry has promised that there will be final legislation on the Scope of Practice for LPNS in the fall.

COLLEGE OF LPNS OF BC:

The college of LPNS have gone through a big change in the last months. Staffing at the College has increased considerably and there is a change in structure, with many departments combined. There is also a new Executive Director starting in August 2003. The College has been working in collaboration with the Ministry to develop a "Decision Guide" for Employers. The College will be "Host" to the Registrars Conference in October 2003.

SUMMARY:

Most Voluntary Associations suffer from fluctuating membership and uncertainty of continuing, and LPNABC is no stranger to this, at times we are afraid of not having a Quorum at our meetings. Right now we are experiencing a vast shortage of volunteer positions, for the past year one person has been doing 4 jobs, which makes it very hard to fulfil one's duties and keep members up to date. Many of our active members are reaching retirement age, and would like to really retire and see the fruits of our handiwork flourish.

In British Columbia there are many changes in the Health Care System, several institutions are closing and some are changing the structure of their staffing. The average age of the LPN in the work force in most areas is between 45-55.

More and more Employers are requiring LPNS to work to their full Scope of Practice. LPNS who have been away from practice and coming back, or practising in a non-LPN role, as they move back to a practising role, upgrading is encouraged to obtain whatever education necessary to ensure that they are able to work to their full potential, some LPNS do the sensible thing and recognise this fact, others are quite happy to work as unregulated personnel.

The Licensed Practical Nurses Association of British Columbia is at a disadvantage because it is a voluntary body. Volunteerism has taken on a new meaning and our position is suffering because of it, we have a total of 5 vacancies.

At present North Road Offices supply us with an answering service and mailing address.

Because we do not have a recording or corresponding secretary, we have entered into an agreement for the North Road Offices to do some of our clerical duties, as this is still in its infancy we will continue to monitor it, to ensure that it will allow the Association to continue.

We will always remember this quote:

“It takes great courage to push yourself to a place that you have never been before...to test your limits.....to break through barriers.”

Sheila A Wilkinson, LPN, President LPNABC

Heidi Jeske, LPN, 1st Vice President LPNABC