



CNHE/IISE

Canadian Nurses for Health and the Environment
Infirmières et Infirmiers pour la Santé et l'Environnement

Meeting Notes from the Joint CNA-CNHE Teleconference Agenda Environmental Health and Nursing Education January 19th, 2010 1300-1400.

Participants joined from across Canada and the United States, including British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Georgetown, U.S.A.

Welcome and Overview

- ❖ Hilda Swirsky welcomed all participants of the teleconference call and introduced Environmental Health and nursing education as the topic for discussion. She discussed the purpose of teleconference call and highlighted what we hope to achieve today or move closer towards as a group: To bring Environmental Health to all nurses and develop ways to incorporate it into their everyday work. This is relevant to practice today because there are more and more diseases/illnesses being attributed to the effects of the environment. We are hoping that through education we can promote awareness of the causative factors and or the relationship between the environment and its effect on illness and disease progression.
- ❖ Hilda introduced herself as a former member of the Environmental Health Reference Group from which the Canadian Nurses for Health and the Environment (CNHE) stemmed from.
- ❖ Individual introductions from across Canada and the United States.

Discussion of current environmental health and nursing education initiatives

How are participants integrating EH into current nursing education curriculums?

- ❖ Carol-University of British Columbia- Last September a revised curriculum three years in the making was introduced. During the development process many faculty members were looking at how they could incorporate environmental health into the curriculum. Carol had a particular focus on the pediatric population. Course planning took place and discussion of how to incorporate

- environmental health into course content. They found that the problem was that there was so much content.
- ❖ Julius-Victoria, British Columbia. Continuing studies. Post graduate studies. Working with health care professionals including medical students who have already entered the workforce. Performs needs assessment. What individuals are seeing in the workforce, patterns and gaps and why the patterns and gaps are seen. Educational opportunities arise when working with the public and health care professionals. Nurses are the majority of individuals that participate in education. Although this program is multidisciplinary.
 - ❖ Laura, Georgetown- Is a member of the Nurses Alliance for a Healthy Environment. They have a sub group that is focused on education.
 - ❖ Darryl, UBC-Interested in more information regarding the Nurses Alliance for a Healthy Environment.

**Conference Date: Nurses Alliance for a Healthy Environment,
June 7th-9th Baltimore, Maryland**

(Information provided by Laura from Georgetown)

- ❖ Monica- Calgary, Alberta. Teaches two classes. Speaks to Doctorate and Graduate students. 2-3hrs. Mostly an overview of the health system including the environment into that discussion. Discusses independent practices. Uses this as a segway into environmental health introducing ideas such as healthy workplaces, and tele meetings to reduce environmental impact.
- ❖ Gloria- Toronto. Environmental Health clinic at Women's College. Students share information that has been given or learned to the college and share the environmental health principles that were discussed in the clinic. E.g. Sick building syndrome, Greening the facility you work in, how to incorporate environmental health nursing through the building they work in.
- ❖ Margot Rykoff- Toronto. Attended the clinic. Incorporated Environmental Health in a Community and Population Health course. This is a theory course offered to third year students. These students worked with the environmental health working group to develop a video on environmental health and nursing. Has included Environmental Health in nursing through a Leadership course an example of how to advocate for change using a model of change combined with a nursing theorist. In the form of a presentation. She also discusses seeing environmental health as a thread running throughout the nursing program. Introducing environmental health in the beginning of the program and

continuing that throughout the course including Environmental Health Assessment.

- ❖ Della- Margot mentioned the connection to the community health clinic. Great opportunity to liaise and help provide direction and explore how to apply those concepts to nursing education or nursing practice. Can include discussion on Environmental Health behaviours in general or in regards to sustainability. Curriculum development as a method of influence. Incorporating those concepts into classes. If not a full semester introduce concepts along the way. E.g. Project or poster. Della discussed the resources available from the CNA website. Determinants of Health>>Environment. Position statement on the determinants of health. These resources can be used to support educators. ? Use the position statement as a leadership project.
- ❖ Jennifer. Winnipeg- Is aware that Red River College is revamping the curriculum for its Nursing program. Hoping to include Environmental Health somewhere in the course content.

Is the focus primarily on lecture/seminar readings and discussions, clinical work or both? What tools are being used to guide this approach?

- ❖ Della mentioned the use of the environmental health and nursing education material available on the CNA website.

Have participants used the tools and resource produced by the CNA? Why or why not? Who is the target audience?

- ❖ Gloria- Environmental health clinic. Uses video, ppt, green health and environmental health and nursing resources.
- ❖ Annette- Ontario. Used at presentations. Videos found them very helpful. Used to collect background info. Also found it helpful for Q&A at presentations as reference material.
- ❖ Margot- Resource that students can use for their projects. Videos especially helpful.
- ❖ Vancouver- PPT. Slides were used in curriculum development for concepts of nursing. Links made between nursing and environmental health.

Plans or Priorities for moving forward

Next steps: what are the plans and priorities arising from this discussion?

- ❖ Hilda Swirsky-We have to move forward how are we going to do this? Working group? Something we can take to our workplace? More frequent teleconference calls? Face to face meetings?
- ❖ Membership
- ❖ Gloria –Environmental Health Clinic- Focus on vulnerable population I.e. Paediatrics- health promotion will help prevent some of the risk. Possible focus group of the vulnerable population.
- ❖ CRNE- Competency, entrance to practice, related to environmental health.
- ❖ Carol- UBC- Helpful to talk to others who have an interest in Environmental Health and nursing. Would like to see a forum to share information. Possibly from this forum other goals can come. But thinks it will be helpful to have a forum to have discussions with other like minded professionals as to what steps can be taken or how to address and move forward with other issues.
- ❖ Hilda- Vulnerable populations. Upcoming Aboriginal Nurses conference: Linking our Knowledge through Diverse Interests. Used to increase knowledge work together to formulate more data.
- ❖ Della- It is a positive to hear that the tools were utilized. Mentions that there are some more dollars allocated by Health Canada to get those tools out to the schools of nursing across Canada. Question arises as to how this can be done? Contact the Deans of Nursing Faculty on behalf of the CNA to discuss how these tools could be implemented into practice or utilized in the course development. Ask the Deans if they know Champions that would be interested in having this information and pass the resources onto those interested faculty members to incorporate into curriculum. Any suggestions as to how we can get the Deans to take this information into consideration and or transferring that information to another faculty member?
- ❖ Monica- Alberta- Organizational structure changes. Lots of information regarding Environmental Health sort of overwhelming need to take the time for face to face or teleconferences in order to ensure that individuals are working with this information.
- ❖ Best practice- Workshops. Tools can be used from the CNA Workshops could possibly further conversations to promote this as best practice. Champions in Nursing- how they use the tools and or application of these concepts. What works and what does not work in the practice setting?

- ❖ Green Teams- Promoting behavioural change. Use this as a change agent. To promote more environmentally conscious decisions in your health care facility.

Would the group prefer future face-face meetings, or teleconferences, in moving forward with its plans and priorities?

- ❖ Skype or information for further discussion. Funding for meetings in person. Skype can be used for up to 20 people.
- ❖ Monica- Alberta- AGNHE- How frequently is this group meeting? Seed money that is available? How much is available? Minimum of contact every two months. Three visits before the end of June.
- ❖ Possible blog as a method of communication.
- ❖ Possible mini-workshops.
- ❖ Face to face meeting- CNA and Executive Director of the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada Aubrey Lawrence will let us use a room for no charge in Ottawa during business hours at CNA or in Toronto during a partnership with the Aboriginal Nurses at their upcoming conference.
- ❖ Majority of group members felt that the conference call was beneficial.

Addenda:

Hi Della. I am so sorry I ended up missing this teleconference. I was at a meeting that went way over although I had planned to be there. These minutes are very helpful. Here at MacEwan University I am trying to encourage the development of a senior nursing elective in 4th year on environmental health. It is a challenge as there are so many competing priorities but I continue to push for this. Perhaps it will become a reality by next year.

Please continue to keep me informed. It has been so frustrating for me as all these teleconferences have been at times that I teach. But I persevere!

Margaret Milner RN MN
Faculty
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program
Faculty of Health & Community Sciences
Grant MacEwan University
9-508F, 10700 - 104 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4S2
Tel: (780) 633 3936 FAX: (780) 497 5757
Email: milnerm0@macewan.ca

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