

# National Nursing Week: Take a closer look at how the nursing profession is strengthening your community

National Nursing Week, from May 12 to 18, offers an opportunity to celebrate the unique contributions of both the nursing profession and individual nurses. "On the occasion of National Nursing Week, I would like to salute the accomplishments of nurses who impact the lives of Canadians in many ways," says Marlene Smadu, RN, president of the Canadian Nurses Association. "Canada's nurses make a difference every day." Nurses are a vital component of our health system and active in our communities. Nurses are in our hospitals and in our schools.

Nurses lead research and international development initiatives. Nurses have a strong presence in Canada's military. Nurses are catalysts for finding solutions to improve access to health services. Nursing and other health disciplines are committed to bringing in new approaches and new models of care, giving increased attention to health promotion and illness prevention.

By popular demand, the 2007 National Nursing Week theme – Think you know nursing? Take a closer look – was reprised for 2008. The theme challenges Canadians to re-examine their perceptions of the nursing profession. It invites Canadians to take a closer look at the varied roles that nurses play and how nurses are contributing to strengthening our health system.



"As our world, country and communities evolve, so must our profession," said Smadu. "As nurses, we have a long and rich history of pioneering patient care, influencing societal change, leading research, and providing advocacy on behalf our patients, as well as collaborating with other professionals. As I travel across this country, I see how nurses continue to be pioneers and I invite you to take a closer look as well." To find out more about National Nursing Week, visit [www.cna-aiic.ca](http://www.cna-aiic.ca).

## Nursing Week Facts

- National Nursing Week is celebrated around the world in conjunction with Florence Nightingale's birthday, May 12th. Florence Nightingale is considered the pioneer of modern nursing.
- Nurses are the largest group of health-care providers in Canada, representing more than one-third of the health-care workforce.
- There are more than 270,000 registered nurses (RNs) in Canada and of these more than 250,000 are working in Canada as nurses.
- The average age of RNs employed in nursing in Canada is 45.

- The hospital sector annually employs nearly two-thirds (63.2 per cent) of RNs.
- The number of nurses who graduated from entry-to-practice programs in Canada in 2006 was the same as it was in 1986. However, the Canadian population has grown by 24.9 per cent since that time, outpacing the number of graduating nurses.
- In 2006, 204 RNs completed their nurse practitioner (NP) education, a 191% increase from the 70 graduates in 2001.



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