Canadian Holistic Nurses Association

Words For Great Nurses

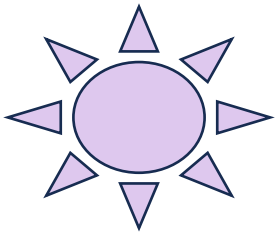
Hello CHNA Members!

I am excited to be taking on the role of CHNA President! There is a lot of excitement for the CHNA coming up this autumn and will be a busy time. We are working on getting ready for the Canadian Nurses Association Conference happening in Winnipeg in September- my hometown of Treaty 1 Territory. CHNA will be hosting a "Meet and Greet" during the conference where we will be able to meet with Nurses and allies across the country. I am hoping to meet many of you if you are attending.

With a busy autumn in sight, I am sure hoping to get some time to relax and enjoy the summer, and I hope everyone else does the same and is taking some time over this season for fun in the sun. Enjoying the warmer weather, the activities, and all the amazing animals.

I am excited for my new role and looking forward to the future and advancement of Holistic Nursing Practice!

Navsharn Dhaliwal
RN BN CCHNC-C
President CHNA



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CONTACT CHNA

The CHNA represents nurses from coast to coast to coast and acknowledges the ancestral territories of all Indigenous people of this country. As the CHNA pledges to uphold and uplift the voice and values of nurses, so do we pledge our commitment to upholding healthy relationships, ethics, protocols, traditional knowledge, and cultural practices that reflect and pay tribute to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Meet the CHNA Board

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The CHNA will be at the CNA Conference
September 21 -24
Meet and Greet Monday Sept 21 10 – 11am

Watch for more info coming soon.

We hope to see you there, to connect and have your say in in supporting holistic nursing practice in Canada!

CHNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The CHNA is supported by a volunteer board of directors who are instrumental in facilitating the growth of the association by listening to Members, networking with like-minded groups and staying apprised of current healthcare issues and policies.

This upcoming year will be an exciting opportunity for growth and involvement. Our recent Members' Survey Results provide us with direction regarding development of Goals for 2026 and onward.

Members are encouraged to continue reaching out to us with suggestions to help guide the CHNA to be the most effective in supporting the growth of holistic nursing in Canada.

Spotlight On...

The CHNA Board of Directors
2026/2027

Read More

President - Navsharn Dhaliwal, RN BN Manitoba
Navsharn was born and raised in Winnipeg and currently reside in Winnipeg on Treaty 1 Territory. She received her Bachelor of Nursing from the Red River College and University of Manitoba Joint program in 2010. Navsharn has a vast experience in many areas of nursing, primarily in Nursing Education. She is currently working as Clinical Education and Simulation Facilitator for The University of Manitoba.

Vice President - Dani Smith, RN HWNC-BC Alberta
Dani is a Board-Certified Health & Wellness Nurse Coach (HWNC-BC) and Functional and Lifestyle Nurse. With over 15 years of experience in acute care, she has witnessed firsthand the growing health challenges patients face and the limitations of reactive healthcare approaches.

Treasurer - Susan Hagar, RN BCPA Ontario
Susan is a Registered Nurse based in Ottawa with over forty years of nursing experience. Throughout her career, whether in clinical practice, leadership, or independent nursing, she's always been guided by the belief that true healing happens when we care for the whole person, not just the condition.

Secretary - Danielle Dawe, RN BN Newfoundland & Labrador
Danielle was introduced to the Chakra system when she overseas to teach English in South Korea in 2009. She is now fascinated with learning more about Vibrational Medicine. She received her certification as a Certified Crystal Practitioner in 2022 and has since taken the level I Holistic Nurse Reiki Practitioner course from the CIINDE in 2023 – 2024.

Read More

Director Sierra Grouette-McDougall, RN Ontario
Sierra's journey into holistic nursing began during her studies at Lakehead University, where she recognized the sacred nature of the healing journey. Appreciating the interconnectedness of mind, body, spirit, and emotions, awakened a desire to delve deeper into holistic principles and coaching techniques through the Comprehensive Holistic Nurse, Nurse Coach & Consultant Certificate Program (CIINDE).

Director - Ramona Gheorghe RN MN WCSI Ontario
Caritas Leader
Ramona (She / Her) is an RN, MN, and WCSI Caritas Leader based in Ontario, Canada, bringing over 25 years of diverse nursing expertise gained internationally and within Canada. Her career spans healthcare, education, and leadership. Ramona earned her Master's in nursing from Ryerson University, specializing in Leadership in Healthcare Policy and Education.

Director - Kelly Flanagan RN,BN, **CCHCN & Consultant**
Manitoba
Kelly (she / her) is a nurse with 15 years of experience across acute, emergency, and critical care, as well as in remote nursing stations in northern Manitoba. She also served as an advisor with the Canadian Institute for Integrative Nursing Development & Education (CIINDE) faculty for the Comprehensive Holistic Nurse & Coaching Certificate Program.

Director / Executive Director Kate Shelest British Columbia
RN BSN MAIH GAHN Scholar
A RN for over 40 years, Kate maintains an independent practice integrating holistic perspectives to health and wellness. With a strong interest in Integral theory, consciousness, and research, her passion for supporting nurses and other health professionals to develop holistic self-care is shared with all her clients.

The Science Behind Hope
by Debra Rose Wilson PhD MSN RN AHN-BC CHT SGAHN

Dr. Wilson is the Chair of Excellence in APSU School of Nursing in Tennessee. She is a Canadian nurse with expertise in psychoneuroimmunology, the science behind holistic thinking.
debrarosewilson@comcast.net

For years, hope may have sounded like a “soft” concept, something reassuring but hard to define. Today, science tells a different story. Hope is more than an emotion or a positive attitude. It is a measurable, trainable, and biologically active human capacity that plays a meaningful role in healing, immune function, resilience, and recovery.

What Do We Mean by Hope?

In healthcare, hope is sometimes confused with optimism or wishful thinking. But scientifically, hope is more grounded than that. Psychologist C. R. Snyder described hope as a combination of two things: agency (the belief that we can move toward a goal) and pathways (the perceived ability to find ways to get there) (Snyder et al., 1991). Hope is believing that movement, choice, and possibility still exist, even in difficult circumstances, even when the situation seems dire. Patients can be very realistic about their diagnosis and still hold hope. Hope might shift from “curing” disease to managing symptoms, reconnecting with loved ones, or finding meaning or higher quality of life during treatment.

Hope Lives in the Brain

Neuroscience has helped explain why hope feels energizing. Brain imaging studies show that hopeful thinking activates networks in the prefrontal cortex, anterior cingulate cortex, and ventral striatum, areas involved in goal setting, motivation, and reward anticipation (Calabro et al., 2023). These regions work together when we imagine a future, make a plan, and feel motivated to act.

Dopamine, often called the “motivation neurotransmitter,” plays a key role here. When the brain anticipates a meaningful goal, dopamine supports engagement and persistence (Tafet & Ortiz Alonso, 2024). From a nursing perspective, this helps explain why patients who feel hopeful are often more engaged in care, more adherent to treatment, and more willing to participate in rehabilitation.

The Science Behind Hope cont. …

Hope is also deeply relational. Oxytocin, a hormone linked to bonding and trust, becomes active in supportive, caring relationships (Froemke & Young, 2021). Hope is cocreated through presence, listening, and connection with others. When holistic nurses show up with compassion, they are influencing biology, not just morale.

Hope Buffers Stress and Supports Immune Function

Hope does more than lift spirits, it helps regulate stress. Chronic stress activates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, increasing cortisol levels that can disrupt immune function, mood, and cardiovascular health. Future oriented thinking is associated with healthier cortisol patterns and faster recovery from stress (Troy et al., 2023).

In a study of women with ovarian cancer, higher levels of hope were linked to lower inflammatory signaling and more regulated stress hormones (Lutgendorf et al., 2024). Similarly, among breast cancer survivors, hope helped buffer the impact of fear on quality of life, with cortisol acting as a biological mediator (Xiong et al., 2024). Hope is physiologically meaningful.

Hope influences immune function by reducing stress-driven inflammation and supporting healthier cortisol rhythms (Muhammad et al. 2023). When people feel hopeful, the brain's stress circuits quiet, lowering prolonged HPA-axis activation and inflammatory cytokine release.

Positive expectations are also linked to better immune cell regulation, improved resilience to illness, and stronger recovery processes through signaling that connect emotions, behavior, and physiological healing pathways overall.

Hope Can Be Learned and Strengthened

One of the most encouraging findings from recent research is that hope is trainable. Repeated engagement in hopeful thinking, setting small goals, imagining positive outcomes, reframing challenges, can strengthen neural pathways associated with motivation and resilience (Xiang et al., 2021). This process, known as neuroplasticity, means the brain changes with experience. Guided imagery, mindfulness, compassionate dialogue, and helping patients name what matters to them all reinforce hopeful brain patterns.

Generating hope is part of the therapeutic process. Science now validates what nurses have always known: cultivating hope can support coping, engagement, physiological

The Science Behind Hope cont. …

regulation, and quality of life. Hope does not deny reality, it helps people live within difficulty situations, forwardfacing, grounded, and connected. And nurses are uniquely positioned to help that happen.

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by Debra Rose Wilson PhD MSN RN AHN-BC CHT SGAHN

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CHNA Bursary Program

The CHNA offers Bursaries throughout the year to it's Members who are looking for support to attend conferences and courses relevant to Holistic Nursing Practice.

Testimonial from recent recipient Layna Palechek
"CHNA Bursary Program – thank you!"

I would like to express gratitude to the CHNA for providing me with the Spring 2026 Bursary funds. Receiving these funds allowed me to attend in-person training for Infant Craniosacral Protocol & Fascia Release Techniques.
I thoroughly enjoyed the course I attended. By the end of the training, I had an enhanced understanding and ability to incorporate gentle touch to support mom and baby dyads – using stretches, positioning, and other hands-on methods to encourage relaxation, comfort, movement and symmetry. I really enjoyed making connections with other health and wellness practitioners who had travelled from across Canada to attend the training, and I appreciated the opportunity to integrate new learning through the hands-on practice and Q&A time that was woven throughout the course.
I have already been able to incorporate this training into my holistic perinatal nursing practice during collaborative postpartum care sessions, when mom and baby dyads are cared for together, by a manual osteopath and myself. I am finding this modality of care to be beneficial for healing, relaxation, and health promotion of both body and mind for moms and babies. Along with promoting general comfort and symmetry, CST and fascia release is often beneficial for infants with positioning, movement, sleep, reflux, breastfeeding, oral tissue, or difficult birth concerns – and we are hearing and seeing these positive results from our care sessions. I look forward to incorporating this into my nursing practice even further in the coming weeks during in-home postpartum care visits with new moms and babies.
Thank you CHNA for supporting the continuing education of holistic nurses in Canada!

You can visit our site to see more about what is available, criteria and deadlines for applications:

https://www.chna.ca/members-area/chna-bursary-application-form/

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CHNA Holistic Nursing Standards of Practice

Philosophical Principles of Holistic Nursing

Healing & Health

1) Human beings are composed of an internal and external environment, and healing can occur at any level including; physical, cognitive, emotional, social, environmental and spiritual.
2) Therapies offered include conventional allopathic techniques, complementary/alternative therapies and the integration of these two types of therapies as appropriate.
3) We acknowledge the complexity of the whole-person-system and take into consideration the ways in which experiences, relationships, community, culture, beliefs, values, environment(s) affect the health and well-being of the individual.
4) Practices can be offered for individuals, groups and communities to foster healing.
5) Health is seen as more than the absence of disease and encompasses balance, harmony, right relationship (between the whole); and an improvement in one's well-being.
6) Healing is multidimensional, can happen without curing and can occur at any level of the human-energetic level.
7) Illness and disease are a part of life and are seen as a teacher and an opportunity for self-awareness and growth.
8) Healing is experienced and defined by the individual.

Self-Reflection, Self-Development and Self-Care

9) Holistic nurses engage in self-reflection, self-development and self-care because they value themselves and their role as role-models and facilitators of healing for self, others and the planet.

You can access the complete CHNA Holistic Nursing Standards of Practice here:
https://www.chna.ca/chna-standards-of-practice/

10) Self-development includes self-assessment, self-reflection, self-care, and healing: a turning inward, as a way to develop self-awareness while examining one's beliefs, values, thoughts, feelings, behaviors and inner wisdom.

Relationship-Based Care

11) Holistic nurses co-create a therapeutic alliance between practitioner and client, with the nurse being part of the healing environment.
12) Holistic nurses utilize therapeutic use of self by engaging in deep listening and holding space with clients to facilitate reflection and growth.

Person-Centred

13) Human beings are the authority in their care, have the right to information about their health and have the capacity to participate knowingly in change, and can advocate on behalf of self.
14) Human beings should have access to complementary and integrative practices and practitioners, with all healthcare professionals striving towards interprofessional collaboration.
15) Human beings have the innate capacity for healing and well-being.

Research & Evidence

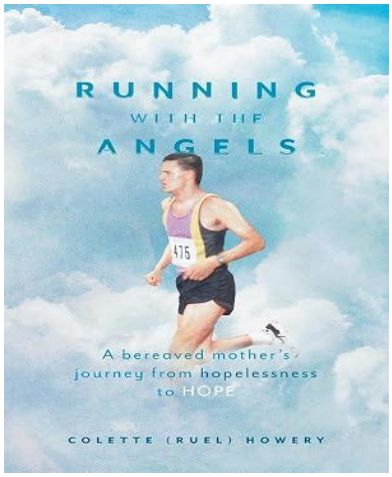
16) Interventions used are an expression of praxis based on evolving theories, and all therapies are based in or informed by evidence.

Environment

17) Environment comprises both animate and inanimate objects, such as physical, social, psychological, cultural, spiritual, climate and energetic patterns.
18) Healthy environments include conditions that foster health and well-being both internally and externally.
19) Environment includes many factors from one's external surroundings, such as temperature, freedom from harm and energy patterns to other interacting factors such as safety, security, and exposure to violence.

You can access the complete CHNA Holistic Nursing Standards of Practice here:
https://www.chna.ca/chna-standards-of-practice/

Recommended Readings

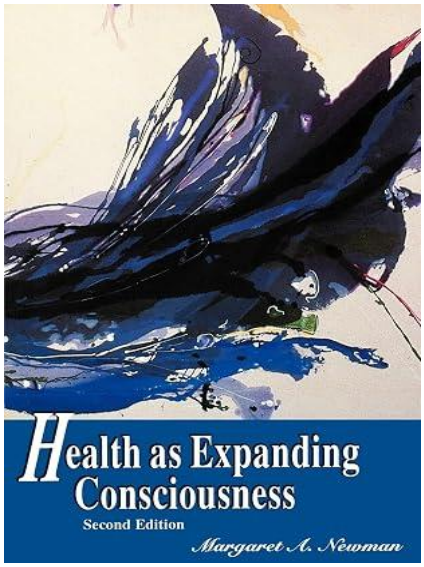


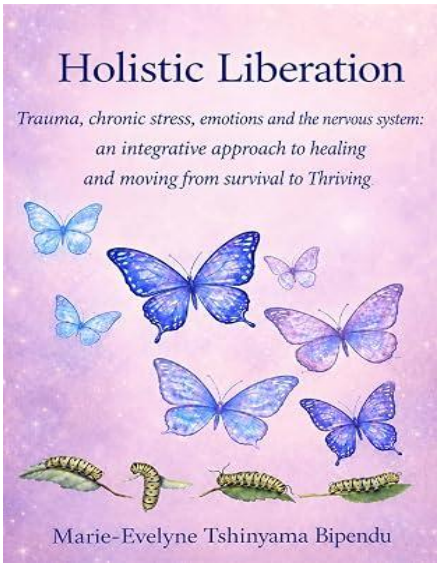
Running with the Angels: A bereaved mother's journey from hopelessness to hope – Colette Howery.

This is such a great and simple read. I met Colette, a retired RN recently as she is from the community I work in. Her book is so touching and I love how she unpacks the topic of grief through her own personal story that is so relatable!
-Twyla Lehmann RN BN, HNB-BC

Recommended by CHNA Member Twyla Lehman

Health as Expanding Consciousness - Margaret Newman
Health and disease comprise a unitary whole of individual and environment. A way to strengthen our view of 'whole' health.
- Kate Shelest RN BSN MAIH CCHNC-C





Holistic Liberation –
Marie-Evelyne Tshinyama

One of our own Canadian holistic nurses !

Chronic stress, emotions & trauma — your body holds the story. Discover it in her book here: English Edition book link on Amazon: https://a.co/d/0ayVW4gu

Also in French: https://a.co/d/07Nct9E6

EVENTS

The CHNA strives to provide opportunities to network and support the growth of holistic nursing in Canada. We explore events and presentations that align with our Mission and Vision:

CHNA MISSION

To support the practice of holistic nursing across Canada by acting as a body of knowledge for its practitioners, by advocating with policy makers and provincial regulatory bodies and by educating Canadians on the benefits of complementary and integrative health care.

CHNA VISION

Complementary and integrative health care are incorporated into all aspects of nursing and the patient care experience within the Canadian health care system.

We value the input of our Members and invite you comments and suggestions as we move into the upcoming year … what/whom would you like to see in a presentation or webinar? Let us know: **info@chna.ca**

SAVE THE DATE:

CNA National Conference — September 21–23, 2026
RBC Convention Centre - Treaty 1 Territory, Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHNA has secured a Meet and Greet space at the conference!
Watch for info re: time and place!
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE

For upcoming events - please log into the Members Area of the CHNA Website:
https://www.chna.ca/login/

Not a Member?? Join Today!
https://www.chna.ca/membership/

Join us at our monthly webinars with expert speakers presenting topics specific to holistic nursing, holistic practices, and self-care.

Webinars are Member Privileges.
To become a Member and access our growing Archives or participate in person: **Memberships**

Webinar notices & ZOOM addresses are also posted on the Members' Community Facebook Page & emailed directly to you.
If you have any problems accessing, please let us know:
info@chna.ca

We want to hear from you with suggestions for presentations in 2026!
This is your CHNA … help us grow it for you!

2026 Schedule is Posted!
Watch for some great presentations for Nursing Week!
EDIT EDIT
Check the Website for more Webinars
Monthly Webinar Schedule - Canadian Holistic Nurses Association (chna.ca)

ALL WEBINARS ARE ARCHIVED FOR MEMBER VIEWING

Advertise with the CHNA

* YOUR ADVERTISEMENT HERE *

CHNA Members Receive A 20% Discount on Annual Packages
ON-LINE APPLICATION HERE

***One-Time Ad Option also available.**

The CHNA has developed an advertising policy for those who align with our Mission and Vision. This opportunity is open to members and non-members.

Membership with the CHNA **already includes** space in our Members' Directory for you to place contact information, link to your website and business icon or headshot.
https://chnamembersdirectory.ca/

Take advantage of advertising with the CHNA!
Contact us at info@chna.ca

NURSE ON BOARD
Your Healthcare Navigation Partner

https://www.nurseonboard.ca/

Would you like to advertise with the CHNA?
info@chna.ca

Are you ready to become a

CIINDE© Certified Holistic Nurse, Nurse Coach & Consultant?

Cohort 13 starts September 28th, 2026

Registration begins: **May 1, 2026** Program start: **September 2026**

.

Designed for nurses seeking to deepen their practice in whole-person care, this program integrates holistic nursing, nurse coaching, consulting and leadership in a way that is practical, evidence-informed, and applicable.

If you're feeling called to expand your scope, strengthen your presence, and practice in a way that aligns with the core values of holistic nursing—this may be your next step.

LEARN MORE

info@theciinde.com

902.448.2932

Online Group Support For Nurses Who Provide Complementary Therapies

This group offers a **supportive,** safe, space for connection, reflection, and **professional** growth for those integrating **holistic** practices and complementary therapies into nursing practice

Each session includes:

- A grounded **meditation**
- Group discussion about **complementary** & **integrative practices** like Reiki and EFT tapping
- Peer support, shared experiences, evidence-based **discussion** and shared resources

Led by: Margarita Weaver, RN Certified Holistic Nurse

When: 3rd Thursday of each month, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM EST via zoom

Cost: $25 drop-in or $20/month

Open to all nurses (no experience in complementary therapies required)

Margarita Weaver HolisticRN

For more information, please contact
Margarita@HolisticRN.ca | 519-330-3931
https://holisticrn.ca

Would you like to advertise with the CHNA?
info@chna.ca

Membership Options

CHNA is happy to offer Membership options that fit your needs including the:

- **Exclusive Canadian Membership**
- **AHNA Chapter Membership**
- **Retired Nurse Memberships**
- **Association Membership (Non-nurse)**
- **Student Nurses Memberships are Free**

Explore the possibilities at https://www.chna.ca/membership/

CHNA/CASE RNs
Mutual Membership Discount Program

Membership in 1 qualifies you for a discou the others!

Canadian Holistic Nurses Association

CASE RNs

*applies to initial CHNA Exclusive Membership Only

CASE RNs was launched by a small group of nurses who acted on their commitment to nursing practice as well as their desire to revolutionize patient care. Across Canada our nurses have taken the risk of leaving the familiar hospital-based model of care to serve the public in another meaningful way.

In 2019 CASE RNs formalized to promote and advocate for the advancement of independent practice nurses, both nationally and internationally. Our members recognize the need to transform the current healthcare 'system' and transform the delivery of care in the community.

Self-employed Nurses Provide Innovative Solutions!

Independent practice nurses use a holistic model of care to meet the unique needs of individuals and their families. We're bridge builders, effectively supporting patients in their lifelong journey across the continuum of care.

Registered Nurses are well positioned to address the gap between hospital and community, given the silos in care delivery and fragmentation of the medical system. Nurses in independent practice offer innovative services and critical assessments that save the publicly-funded system time and money, which better serves the needs of Canadians.

The Canadian Association of Self- Employed Registered Nurses connects Registered Nurses who are self-employed and offering their services outside the public health care system. We support members through networking and educational events, while informing the public and policy-makers on the ever-expanding scope of nursing practice, and how that benefits health care consumers.

Consider a Membership with CASE RNs https://www.case-rns.ca/page-18074

Members of the CHNA Board welcome and invite all suggestions from you to grow our organization and community. We want to hear from you!

Contact us at: info@chna.ca
Follow us on Facebook:
CHNA Members Community (Members Only) or Canadian Holistic Nurses Association (Public)

Join us on LinkedIn &
Instagram : chna_community_

THANKYOU TO EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS NEWSLETTER!