

2009-2011

# In Review



CANADIAN  
FEDERATION  
OF NURSES  
UNIONS

WHERE KNOWLEDGE  
MEETS KNOW-HOW

Our *30th*  
Anniversary



Kathleen Connors  
1983-1999



Sonny Arrajado  
1981-1982

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions is celebrating 30 years. At moments it seems as if some of that time has gone by so quickly. I remember my first convention in 1985. It seems like yesterday, but in some ways, it seems like a century ago when you think of all we have done and all we have seen. We have been through a great deal together and accomplished so much. Our organization has grown and keeps growing. Now we represent over 176,000 nurses and nursing students. Nurses, you are our strength, each and every one of you!



With our growing and changing membership, we have changed ourselves. Our priorities and our communications have come to reflect new generations, increased diversity in our ranks, emerging research, new ways of communicating, and changing public policy contexts. Our mandate to support research and sharing of best practices, to advocate on behalf of nurses for better working conditions, to champion the best health care for our patients, and to bring nurses' knowledge and vision to policymakers, remains as current and relevant as ever. And when this means speaking truth to power, this we do.

Our influence is growing as well. You will see in this document some of the many things we do and support. Our commitment to being political without being partisan allows us to offer a unified perspective and the best solutions while working with all political leaders and professional experts.



# president's message



Mary Dwyer  
1982-1983

This is a time of celebration and of reflection; of remembering where we have come from while eagerly anticipating the future. It is also a time to show our gratitude. We have much to be thankful for and many to be thankful to. Previous generations of nursing leaders have made our tasks easier as we stand on their shoulders. Our member organizations, each of them dynamic, strong and hard-working, inform us, give us voice, make us who we are. Our unity gives us the confidence to know that we are up to the challenges before us.

In solidarity always,

Linda Silas  
President

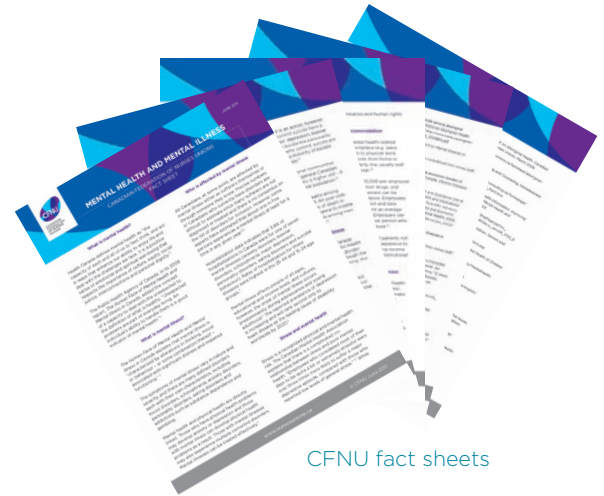


Debra McPherson  
1999-2000  
with Kathleen Connors  
1983-1999

*"We cannot delay needed improvements to our health care system and we cannot continue with misplaced priorities that leave health care lower than tax cuts, prisons and military spending... It is time to make the strategic health care investments Canadians expect and deserve."*

CFNU press release on Federal Budget, March 23, 2011

# 2009-2011 research



CFNU fact sheets

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions is committed to evidence-based action. To that end, we support the creation and sharing of research across a broad range of topics relating to health care, the working lives of nurses, and safety.

Our research is shared in briefs, reports, workshops, roundtables, MP breakfasts, fact sheets, our web site and through our work with allies. Please review the remaining sections of this document for more specific examples.

## Research to Action: Applied Workplace Solutions for Nurses

Research to Action is CFNU's longest running and largest research project, completed in the spring of 2011. The project involved multiple levels and numbers of stakeholders. More information on the project's outcomes and next steps can be reviewed at [thinknursing.ca](http://thinknursing.ca).



RTA Knowledge Transfer Conference 2011

## Social Return on Investment in Nursing

In January 2011, leaders of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions and the Canadian Nurses Association co-hosted a roundtable to bring to light current evidence regarding social return on investments in nursing and to help position policy and initiate projects that will enable nurses to be active participants in public discussions around the re-negotiation of the 2014 Health Accord.



Think tank  
Sept .7, 2010

## Valuing Care — Valuing Nurses

On September 7, 2010, fifty-six health care experts from across Canada met to address the continuous pressures placed on the health care system. Results of discussions are presented in the document, *Taking charge: building on the momentum to improve health care*. Informed by evidence, the directions outlined in this document were provided to Canada's health ministers to consider as they work to maintain and enhance a health care system that is effective, equitable and accessible to all Canadians.

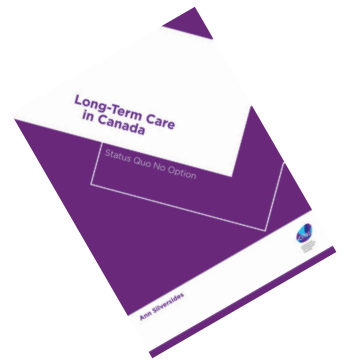
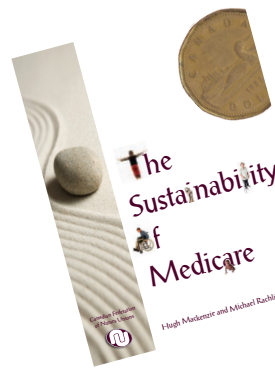


[thinknursing.ca](http://thinknursing.ca)  
web site

**thinknursing!ca**  
Towards a Better Workplace

*Investments in home care, long-term care and a national drug plan would all serve to control overall health costs, ensure better care, and reduce pressures and backlogs being felt across all parts of the health care system.*

Kingston Whig Standard, March 17, 2011



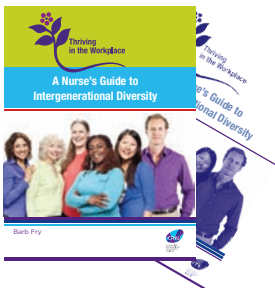
The CFNU has been moving forward with social media. We have a Facebook page, we are using Twitter, we are producing videos for our web pages and for posting on Youtube, and we are creating project-specific web sites. Please visit our Thriving in the Workplace site linked to [thinknursing.ca](http://thinknursing.ca) to find new interactive content. Earlier this year, we launched a new look for our graphics materials and an updated logo. Our publications program has continued with new books and reports. Please see below and visit [nursesunions.ca](http://nursesunions.ca) to download them.

***Sustainability of Medicare***

This report by Hugh Mackenzie and Michael Rachlis moves away from the traditional debate and rhetoric on health care spending to bring the conversation down to the level of dollars and cents. It exposes the costs and drivers behind the argument that medicare is unsustainable and concludes that medicare is as sustainable as we want it to be.

***Experts and Evidence: Opportunities in Nursing***

Written by Jane Coutts, *Experts and Evidence: Opportunities in Nursing* explores some of Canada's leading nursing research while providing concrete examples of how education, innovation, safe staffing practices and healthy work environments contribute to better patient care and greater stability within the health care system.



# publications

***Long-Term Care in Canada: Status Quo No Option***

In response to overwhelming calls for action on this oft neglected area of health care, CFNU published a report on the state of long-term care in Canada. Written by Ann Silversides, the report explores, from the perspective of national and provincial experts in long-term care, the challenges and realities facing the long-term care system in Canada, and the people who depend on it, including seniors and those with chronic illnesses.

***Thriving in the Workplace: A Nurse's Guide to Intergenerational Diversity***

*Thriving in the Workplace* explores intergenerational diversity in the nursing workforce. There are two components to the project. The first is an interactive website providing an introduction to intergenerational issues in the nursing workplace through a list of resources, conversation guides, videos and quizzes. The second is a report and workbook written by Barb Fry to help nurses and their colleagues thrive in an intergenerational environment.



Thriving in the Workplace web page

*As the debate over health care rages in the United States, Canadians can celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Canada Health Act, which brought accessible, universal, quality public health care to all our citizens, regardless of their ability to pay.*

Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions press release, November 17, 2009



# 2009-2011 influence

A Message from Nurses:  
Health Care Priorities for Canadians

- Negotiate a new Health Accord**  
Fiscal leadership, stable funding, and a national health human resources plan that protects and enhances our publicly funded and delivered health care system.
- A strategy on continuum of care**  
A comprehensive national strategy on aging within a continuum of accessible, timely and appropriate care. A lack of access to home care and long-term care burdens families and the health care system.
- A national strategy on poverty**  
A strategy to reduce poverty that addresses homelessness, conditions in Aboriginal communities and child poverty, recognizing the connection between health outcomes and the social determinants of health.
- A comprehensive national drug plan**  
Canada is the third most expensive country in the world for brand-name drugs. A National comprehensive and universal public Pharmacare plan would save billions of dollars for Canadians, improve health outcomes and reduce suffering.



We are a strong voice on Parliament Hill and in other national venues. The following are just some of the ways the CFNU makes nurses' voices heard.

## Parliamentary Standing Committees on Finance and Health



The CFNU brought recommendations to the Standing Committee on Finance for a national pharmaceutical plan, a national observatory on health human resources and an innovation fund for retention and recruitment. We stressed that public health care is sustainable and called for stable long-term funding in the context of a renegotiated Health Accord as the ten-year 2004 Accord expires. Together on a panel with the CMA, the CNA, and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, the CFNU presented a report on Health Human Resources to the Standing Committee on Health.

## MP Breakfasts



The CFNU held three MP breakfasts: the first was on Pandemic Planning, the second on HIV-AIDS and the most recent on Long Term Care. At each event the CFNU brings expert speakers, engages in a discussion and then provides information about the event and the topic to all MPs in a follow-up mailing.

## Key Meetings



When the premiers or health ministers meet, the CFNU is there. At the premiers' meeting in Regina in 2009, the CFNU came out to question why there had been so little progress in the five years since the 2004 Accord. At the same time, the CFNU held a Primary Health Clinic in the Park. That week, the CFNU released three opinion pieces in Saskatchewan newspapers on health care accountability, expanding medicare and primary health. Pandemic planning was the focus of the CFNU's efforts at the Health Minister's meeting in 2009. At the 2010 Council of the Federation, the CFNU pressed First Ministers to come to the table early to negotiate a new Health Accord to ensure continuity and stable funding.

## Federal Election



In the recent federal election, the CFNU identified four priorities: the renewal of the 2004 Health Accord, a national strategy on poverty, long-term and home care, and a national drug plan for everyone. We distributed to members a pamphlet outlining those priorities and urging nurses to vote; we sent a postcard to candidates promoting those priorities; we prepared questions for the major parties and posted their responses on our web site; we posted information and resources for our members and activists; and we published opinion articles in the *Globe and Mail*.



*"Not a lot of work has been happening in some provinces. At best, it's a patchwork approach through the provinces and territories," said Linda Silas, president of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. "The federal government has dropped the ball... we need to put pressure on the federal government to show leadership."*

The CFNU is a link for nurses to the wider trade union movement and other health organizations. We share nurses' knowledge and perspectives and add our strengths to theirs.



### Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

The CFNU joined the CLC delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women. In 2010, labour and women's groups issued a "reality check" describing Canada's poor record on women's equality. The CFNU is a member of the Trade Union Research Collective which promotes understanding of the role unions play in the workplace, labour market and society, and how unions are a force for inclusion, equality, and democracy. A broad coalition of health care organizations, including the CFNU (through the CLC), supported the retention of the federal gun registry defeating Bill C-391.



### Canadian Doctors for Medicare

The CFNU works with The Canadian Doctors for Medicare to promote new ideas and best practices within medicare through the My Better Medicare campaign. In early 2011, the CMA and *Maclean's* launched a series of town hall meetings to create a "national dialogue" on health care. With leadership from the Canadian Doctors for Medicare, the CFNU and the Canadian Health Coalition have ensured that a commitment to public health care is reflected in that dialogue.



### Quality Worklife – Quality Healthcare Collaborative

As a founding member of the QWQHC, CFNU works in collaboration with health care partners to demonstrate the value of quality worklife in health care.

# working with allies



### Canada Health Infoway

The CFNU is a member of the Nursing Reference Group advising Canada Health Infoway on clinical adoption of electronic health records across the country.

### International Council of Nurses (ICN)

CFNU is a member of the International Council of Nurses Workforce and has a strong presence at ICN congresses and conferences, delivering presentations on the issues and accomplishments of Canadian nurses.

### International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

In June 2010, CFNU attended the ITUC (hosted by the CLC) where delegates from around the world met to discuss policy directions for the next four years. Discussions on governance, health, education, environmental sustainability and gender equality issues that affect workers throughout the world were held.



*"We urge the premiers to think about the protection of health care workers and the health human resources strategies that have to be developed by employers and unions in each of the provinces to ensure adequate health human resources during a pandemic."*

*Regina Leader-Post, August 6, 2009*

# 2009-2011 supporting nurses' work

The CFNU first priority is to support the well-being of nurses.

## Occupational Health and Safety Network

In 2010, CFNU created an Occupational Health and Safety Network which has already taken on issues regarding the right to refuse dangerous work, pandemic preparedness and presumptive legislation for nurses. In June 2010, CFNU hosted a roundtable to consider the most up-to-date evidence.



CFNU Founding Convention 1981

## Pandemic Preparedness

During the 2009 H1N1 outbreak, the CFNU was the lead national organization lobbying government and health authorities on the precautionary principle for all health workers.

## Overtime and Absenteeism

CFNU commissioned an update to our 2009 report on trends in overtime and absenteeism among Canadian nurses. In 2010, nurses worked overtime equivalent to 11,400 full-time jobs. Every week in 2010, on average, 19,200 nurses were absent due to illness or disability. The rate of illness or disability-related absenteeism among full-time nurses remained higher than in all other occupations.

## Support in Bargaining

The CFNU maintains a popular contract comparison document, Overview of Key Nursing Contract Provisions, which is updated annually and is permanently linked to our home page at nursesunions.ca. We are there to support provincial unions with research, lobbying and always messages of solidarity.

## Support for Nurses' Work

The CFNU presses for better health human resources management in the context of respect for the nursing profession and nurses' work. When the Canadian Blood Services proposed to eliminate nurses from donor screening, the CFNU placed an advertisement in response and set up safeblood.ca to educate the public on the issue. Today pilot projects are being evaluated in Calgary and Winnipeg.

On behalf of 158,000 nurses, nurses unions have asked Health Canada to reject the Canadian Blood Services proposal to replace nurses with unregulated, lesser skilled workers.  
Meridian Booster, December 2, 2009

# In Review

2009-2011

## Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

The Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions was formed under the name the National Federation of Nurses Unions in May 1981. At a special convention, the Federation joined the Canadian Health Coalition in 1982. The CFNU joined the Canadian Labour Congress in 1997. The mandate of the organization is to protect and promote the interests of nurses, their patients, and the public health care system. We are the pan-Canadian voice for nurses.

At the CFNU Biennial Convention in 2005, nurses voted to create an International Solidarity Fund to support initiatives that foster solidarity with those being disadvantaged as a result of a natural disaster or an unfair economic and social order.



### We raise the tough issues:

- Privatization is the wrong prescription
- Improving working conditions to retain nurses
- A national public Pharmacare plan
- Improving access and protecting medicare
- A ban on direct-to-consumer advertising (DTCA)
- A national strategy on poverty
- Equality in First Nations/Aboriginal health care
- Restoration of federal support for women's programs
- A national health human resources strategy
- Nurses' workload and overtime
- Ending hallway nursing
- Long-term and home care in every community
- Nurse-patient ratios
- A renewed Health Accord

### The 2011 CFNU National Executive Board

Linda Silas President Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU)	Bev Dick Vice-President United Nurses of Alberta (UNA)	Marilyn Quinn President New Brunswick Nurses Union (NBNU)
Pauline Worsfold Secretary-Treasurer Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU)	Rosalee Longmoore President Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN)	Janet Hazelton President Nova Scotia Nurses' Union (NSNU)
Debra McPherson President British Columbia Nurses' Unions (BCNU)	Sandi Mowat President Manitoba Nurses Union (MNU)	Mona O'Shea President Prince Edward Island Nurses' Union (PEINU)
Janice Buchanan Vice-President British Columbia Nurses' Unions (BCNU)	Linda Haslam-Stroud President Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA)	Debbie Forward President Newfoundland & Labrador Nurses' Union (NLNU)
Heather Smith President United Nurses of Alberta (UNA)	Vicki McKenna First Vice-President Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA)	Laura Gallant Communications Director Canadian Nursing Student's Association (CNSA)

## Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

### 1981-2011

#### Presidents

1981-1982  
Sonny Arrajado  
MNU

1982-1983  
Mary Dwyer  
NLNU

1983-1999  
Kathleen Connors  
MNU

1999-2000  
Debra McPherson  
BCNU

2000-2003  
Kathleen Connors  
MNU

2003-present  
Linda Silas  
NBNU

#### Vice-Presidents

1981-1982  
Mary Dwyer  
NLNU

1983-1985  
Jane Murray  
PEINU

1985-1987  
Madeleine Gaudet (Steeves)  
NBNU

1987-1989  
Barbara LeBlanc  
SNA

1989-1993  
Maria Ward  
PEINU

1993-1997  
Debra McPherson  
BCNU

#### Secretary-Treasurers

1981-1989  
Jill Jones  
SUN

1989-1997  
Dorothy Bragg  
NLNU

1997-2001  
Debra McPherson  
BCNU

2001-  
Pauline Worsfold  
UNA

2841 Riverside Drive  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1V 8X7  
www.cfnu.ca

Tel.: 613-526-4661  
Fax: 613-526-1023  
1-800-321-9821