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TRU faculty member leads national project to support nurses during pandemic

KAMLOOPS—An associate professor in the Thompson Rivers University (TRU) School of Nursing is heading a nationwide project to provide a platform for professional networking and practice support for nurses entering the health-care profession during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a grant from the Canadian Nurses Foundation (CNF) and administrative assistance from the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), Judy Duchscher has assembled a team of students, new graduates and expert nurses to create a web-based network where newly graduated nurses can go for support.

Called [Nursing The Future](#), the site gives registered, registered psychiatric and licensed practical nurses a place where they can share information and connect socially as they navigate entering their profession during a challenging time in health care.

Studies have shown between 31 and 65 per cent of new nurses consider leaving the profession within the first two years; 67 percent of them report experiencing burnout and express a desire to quit. More needs to be done to support these newly graduated practitioners during this difficulty entry period so they can be retained in their profession.

“We have an opportunity to wrap our arms around our newest practitioners during one of the most challenging times in our contemporary health-care history,” said Duchscher, who is the project’s director. Duchscher is internationally renowned for her work in understanding and responding to the initial professional role transition challenges of new nurses.

Nursing The Future is sponsored by the CNF’s COVID-19 Fund for Nurses until July 31, 2021.

“Nursing The Future is a key initiative of CNF’s COVID-19 fund as this global public-health crisis has placed tremendous tension on the nursing workforce, particularly new practitioners who are transitioning from school to work,” said Christine Rieck Buckley, chief executive officer of the CNF.

The website offers nurses a network of information and social connection, a way to share the latest educational preparation advances, research and workplace innovation related to professional role transition. It also has resources to help health-care educators, administrators and experienced nurses who are supporting the newest members of the profession. Finally, Nursing The Future is a source of information on contemporary nursing issues, professional leadership and workplace culture intended to encourage and support all nurses.

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NEWS RELEASE



“Nursing the Future is a wonderful initiative to support the transition of our graduates into the profession and to help them develop a strong professional identity. The impact of this work will be significant in terms of positive outcomes for the retention and engagement of nurses in the workforce,” said Dr. Rani Srivistava, dean of TRU’s School of Nursing. “It’s fantastic to see Dr. Duchscher’s expertise and leadership in this area – and an immense source of pride for all of us at the School of Nursing at TRU.”

CNA President Tim Guest said the initiative is especially helpful as new nurses settle into a variety of clinical situations and are looking for mentors and other supports. “The timing is particularly appropriate given that new nurses may face added stressors as they move into practice for the first time in so many settings that have been managing the added pressure of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

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Please go to www.nursingthefuture.ca for updates

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