

HAPPY NURSE'S WEEK: YEAR OF THE NURSE

Lead, Innovate and Excel



Labrador - Grenfell
Health

May 12, 2020



Today, I want to send all nurses my heart felt gratitude, a special acknowledgement and best wishes as we celebrate National Nurses Week. This week we are celebrating in unprecedented times and I wanted to take a moment today to reflect on the important role each of you play as a nurse in Labrador-Grenfell Health , in our province, in our country and in our world.

As many of you know, the World Health Organization declared 2020 as “ Year of the Nurse and Midwife” in honor of Florence Nightingale’s 200th Birthday on May 12 and it is my privilege to send greetings on her Birthday. This year the theme is “A Voice to Lead – Nursing the World to Health”.

This certainly has been a year that fits this theme. Most of us have never worked in such uncertain times but our education, compassion and love for what we do has provided us with the strength and courage to continue to do what we love “be a nurse.”

I am not sure how much you know much about Florence, and her contribution to our profession. One of my favorite books is “Notes on Nursing: Florence Nightingale,” this book highlights the foundation to modern day nursing. Therefore, I want to share a little about her and how her work has contributed to how we are nursing in this pandemic.

In 1854 she was called to help in the Crimean War to provide care to dying soldiers. When she arrived in Turkey with her team of 38 nurses, she noted appalling conditions: overcrowded wards, patients lying in filth, sewer on the floor, poor ventilation, terrible diet, and lack of hand hygiene practice by practitioners.

Florence was a math teacher before she decided to become a nurse and using her mathematical skills (statistics), she developed Polar Area Diagrams to demonstrate that more soldiers were dying from the conditions in the hospital than the battle wounds they had suffered on the battlefield. The mortality rate was 40%. Her information provided the key to change practices and within one year the mortality rate was decreased to 2.2 %.

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She also pushed for data to inform medical decisions and in 1860 she advocated for the uniform collection of hospital statistics so we could compare patient outcomes from one hospital to another, one region to another and one country to another. Her statistical analysis of disease was instrumental in establishing the science of epidemiology which is used today to track the spread of diseases such as COVID-19.

She also insisted that nurses follow good infection control practices (now a division on its own) and she preached "WASH YOUR HANDS! Never since her time has this message been so important.

As we navigate through COVID-19 it is critical we reflect on our history and acknowledge, thank, and recognize our founder. She was a leader ahead of her time. Our profession is built on evidence-based practice, compassion, and knowledge. Our founder keenly demonstrated the "A Voice to Lead – Nursing the World to Health".

Today as I reflect, I am proud to be a nurse and to be surrounded by so many courageous nurses. I feel privileged to work in the most northern parts of our province and I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with such a wonderful and committed team of nurses. I want to thank you for your contributions, your hard work, your determination, and passion for what we do.

At Labrador-Grenfell Health we are the "Nurses of the North". While we recognize that we work in some of the most challenging environments, we also recognize the rewards and the opportunities.

Please take a moment today to reflect and acknowledge the many nurses across our region, our colleagues, and our team, recognize each other for what we do. Be proud of your profession, you make a difference! We have prepared a short video to celebrate the many nurses around our region- we wanted to recognize you for your commitment and fortitude. I hope you enjoy!

In appreciation and gratitude,



Donnie
Chief Nursing Office- LGH

PS... [Click here](#) for a CBC tribute to her ... "Florence Nightingale used mathematics to improve health care"