

# Editorial



Paul Fulbrook, joint editor



Lynne Harrison, joint editor

The last few years has seen a growing interest in international networking, made easier by greater access to computers and the Internet, as well as the use of e-mail as a method of instantaneous communication that makes distance irrelevant. Easier, cheaper means of transportation, especially air travel, have made the world a much smaller, more accessible place. Individual nurses are visiting and working in different countries, attending conferences and meeting with other nurses from all over the world. The benefits are clear. The exchange of information, discussion and dialogue can only improve patient care, while the exploration of different contexts and cultures adds to the richness of our own personal experience.

Through this networking activity, nurses can form a powerful, collective voice. Some of you may know of the worldwide survey of critical care nursing associations carried out by Ged Williams of the Australian College Critical Care Nurses and colleagues from Asia, America and Europe. Among other things, the survey found an overwhelming level of support for forming a world federation of critical care nurses and the World Federation of Critical Care Nursing (WFCCN) was duly established on October 30, 2001, during the 8th World Congress on Intensive Care in Sydney, Australia (see page 103).

Future issues of *CONNECT* will keep you up to date with its progress. However, several fundamental issues require consideration, including:

- What would be the *value* of a world federation of critical care nurses?
- *Why* should we form a world federation of critical care nurses?

A world federation could provide varied and exciting opportunities for communicating and collaborating with colleagues from around the world. Pooling ideas and solutions to problems would expand and strengthen the knowledge base for the practice of critical care nursing. A world federation could provide a forum for facilitating creative ways of thinking and dealing with challenges. The collective voice of a world federation could be politically powerful in terms of negotiating on behalf of, and promoting the value of, critical care nurses and nursing.

In caring for critically ill patients, nurses strive to provide high-quality, patient-focussed care, and it is imperative we promote best practice across the globe. We believe the end product of everything we do as nurses should be measured by its ability to make a difference to patients' lives. This should be the real driving force for a world federation. If we do not see this as the main outcome of a world federation, then perhaps we should forget about forming one! But we hope it will not be a case of 'let's just forget it', and we would like you to join in the debate through *CONNECT*. Let's hear your voice on the development of a world federation of critical care nurses. Do we need one? And if so, why? Or if not, why? What do you think are the potential pitfalls or unique qualities of such an organisation? What do you think should be its main goals?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Paul Fulbrook and Lynne Harrison

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#### Joint Editors

**Paul Fulbrook**, Clinical Reader in Critical Care, Institute of Health and Community Studies, Bournemouth University, UK  
**Lynne Harrison**, Lecturer Practitioner in Intensive Care Nursing, University of Central Lancashire and Critical Care Unit, Royal Preston Hospital, UK

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