

Editorial



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Personal Reflections on Buenos Aires and the WFCN

Ged Williams, Associate Editor

Let me be bold and make the following statement: the 2nd Congress of the World Federation of Critical Care Nurses (WFCN), held in Buenos Aires in August 2005 was the most significant and historical event in the world of critical care nursing to date! The conference was a combined event, which included the World Congresses of the World Federation of Societies of Intensive and Critical Care Medicine (WFSICCM) and the World Federation of Pediatric and Intensive and Critical Care Societies (WFPICCS). I feel very privileged to have been one of 4500 delegates who participated in the events. Some of the main highlights were:

1. The first ever Joint World Congress of WFSICCM, WFCN and WFPICCS.
2. Launch of the WFCN Declaration of Buenos Aires: Position statement on the provision of critical care workforce.
3. Launch of the WFCN Declaration of Madrid: Position statement on the provision of critical care nursing education.
4. Launch of the first WFCN report 2001-2005
5. The inaugural Joint council meeting of the WFSICCM and WFCN and a commitment to ongoing regular meetings and shared activity.
6. The inaugural meeting of South American critical care nursing leaders hosted by WFCN at which a commitment, plan and time frame was established to form the Pan American Federation of Critical Care Nurses in 2006.
7. Agreement by WFCN to hold its 4th World Congress in South Africa in 2007. It is anticipated that a forum of African Critical Care Nursing leaders will meet at this event and draw up a plan and time frame for an African Federation of Critical Care Nurses before the end of the current decade.
8. Election of a new WFCN leadership team and confirmation that WFCN now has 27 member countries.

The challenges for the WFCN remain enormous: the establishment of critical care nursing associations in countries where such professional support is absent, provision of quality education programs, influencing governments' policies on the provision of critical care services, world-wide distribution of resources, poverty, HIV/AIDS, natural disasters and the threat of war and terrorism. All these, and more, challenge individual critical care nurses on a daily basis. The WFCN and its member associations have an important role to provide leadership, advice and direction on how these issues may be tackled locally, nationally and globally.

On a personal note I wish to record my sincere thanks to the many people and organisations that have helped me, and the WFCN, achieve what we have so far. Individually I would have to thank hundreds of wonderful people – many of them know who they are. On this occasion however I will identify significant organisations and their leaders in particular:

- Code Blue Nursing Agency and their Director Mr Rod Hancock, who shared our vision and enthusiasm from the start.
- The WFSICCM, especially Dr Philip Lumb (outgoing president) and Dr Jose Besso (incoming president).
- The International Council of Nurses and in particular Judith Oulton, CEO of ICN and a great support to me personally.
- The Australian College of Critical Care Nurses who, like those already mentioned, shared the vision and passion and provided practical financial support to ensure I could get to the many strategically important meetings I needed to.
- Finally and most importantly I must sincerely thank my wife Tracey and our four children for their patience, tolerance and love - my



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passion was often been their pain!
As outgoing Chair of WFCN I feel truly privileged to have had the many opportunities given to me and wish to thank everyone who has been involved for everything we have been able to achieve together.

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