



Paul Fulbrook - Editor



GUEST EDITORIAL

Adriano Friganovic, President, Croatian National Nurses Federation; President, Croatian Nurses Society of Anesthesia, Reanimation, Intensive Care and Transfusion

Sharing knowledge - sharing expertise

When we look back ten to fifteen years ago, we can see that there is a big difference between nursing then and now. This difference is especially visible in Croatian nursing. We have made good progress, especially now that we have elevated nursing education to bachelor degree for nursing, but there is still a lot of work to be done.

Nurses have always made a big contribution to healthcare services, and to the nation, but in the past that was not enough to achieve our aim to have nursing education on a par with most other European countries. Therefore, our senior nurses became very active at an international level to try to convince our government to provide higher level education. We became a member of the International Council of Nurses, the European Federation of Nurses, and our professional nursing societies became members of major European and world nursing federations. This provided the catalyst for change, and in 1999 the School for Applied Studies started Croatia's first three-year bachelor of nursing degree program. This was just the beginning.

One of the most important things for any profession is to establish an effective network within the country and beyond. This is where national nursing societies play an important role. However, nurses in Croatia often ask the same question, "Why do I have to pay a membership fee, is there some benefit for me?" The answer is very simple and clear. All our achievements have been realised because we were united. Furthermore, being a member of a society or federation provides nurses with opportunities to be a part of professional network and to share knowledge and expertise. Professional societies offer possibilities to meet new people, to learn more, and to discover new ways of working. One of the most important roles of professional associations is the organisation and provision of conferences, which provide many examples of nursing practice development and offer lots of new ideas. At the recent congress of the World Federation of Critical Care Nurses, which was held in Sibenik, Croatia there were almost 400 nurses from 24 different countries. The vast range of knowledge, research and experience on offer is evidenced by the large number of abstracts, which are presented in this issue of

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Connect. The congress was a great experience and outside of the formal proceedings there were lots of opportunities to network with colleagues from all around the world.

The World Federation of Critical Care Nurses is an excellent example of a professional organisation that is striving to provide a strong, cohesive and effective platform for cooperation on a world level. It has established links with nurses and national critical care nursing organisations in all continents. Through its efforts it helps to establish new societies in other countries, and this in turn helps the federation network to become stronger and more successful. Through our combined efforts we can share our knowledge and expertise, achieve our goals, and improve nursing around the world.

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