



OPEN LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Re: National Nursing Week 2011: *Nursing – the health of our nation*

Dear Colleagues:

May 9-15 is National Nursing Week, a time when Canadians can honour and celebrate the outstanding contribution nurses make to our society. Every day, nurses apply their extensive knowledge, experience and skills to ensure the well-being of individuals, families and communities across the country and around the world. Nursing research advances the frontiers of nursing science and provides the evidence on which we base clinical decisions, best practices and health policies.

This year's theme, *Nursing – the health of our nation*, reflects the positive impacts our nurses and our profession have on the lives of every citizen, and the cumulative effects of those impacts toward building a healthy society. It also speaks to the important advocacy work that nurses carry out in the public interest: spearheading action on patient safety and disease prevention, promoting healthy lifestyles, and working to address health and social inequities.

May 12th is an especially significant day as it not only marks the birthday of Florence Nightingale, but is also International Nurses Day. *Closing the gap: Increasing access and equity*, the theme for 2011, underscores the commitment of nurses globally to promote social justice and health equity, and to address social, environmental and economic determinants of health. Let us join our nursing colleagues from around the world in celebrating this important occasion.

Our profession's commitment to the health of our nation was unmistakable during the recent federal election. Nurses across the country called for strong federal support for pan-Canadian goals and action plans to strengthen, expand, maintain – and transform – our health system, to ensure it meets the evolving needs of Canadians.

I call upon the public, governments, organizations and nurses to take the time to recognize the vital contribution nursing makes toward the public good. Find out what's happening in your community during National Nursing Week, and take part in celebrating nursing – a profession in which going above and beyond is a daily occurrence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith Shamian".

Judith Shamian, RN, PhD, LLD (hon), D.Sci. (hon), FAAN
President