



URGENT OPEN LETTER TO ALL B.C. NURSES

Hello,

I am writing to you in my capacity as President of the Association of Registered Nurses of British Columbia (ARNBC), regarding two legal actions brought against the ARNBC. One of these lawsuits, already commenced, by the BCNU and Debra McPherson is also against the College of Registered Nurses of BC (CRNBC). In addition to suing the ARNBC and the College, that lawsuit names myself as President of the ARNBC and Cynthia Johansen, CEO and Registrar of the College as personal defendants. These two legal actions are a challenge to the future of the Association.

ARNBC and CRNBC have not spoken publicly until now about the initial lawsuit. We have instead worked to open a dialogue with the BCNU in the hope that we can find a way to build bridges towards a more collaborative environment that respects the different roles of all three nursing organizations, allowing us to work together for the betterment of the profession and to support quality patient care.

Sadly, that effort has been unsuccessful. On April 30, the same law firm that acts for the BCNU in the first lawsuit, began a second legal action against ARNBC, a legal action which threatens to undermine the work the Association has done over the past four years on behalf of the profession and patients. Two members of the BCNU Council, Michelle Sordal (who is currently running for a position on the ARNBC Board), and Liz Ilczaszyn, both of whom are ARNBC members have commenced a legal process intended to declare null and void all previous activities of ARNBC.

We are disappointed that the BCNU continues to move ahead with its lawsuit, and to, most likely, back the most recent one, particularly since the legal costs, currently approaching \$500,000 and mounting for CRNBC and ARNBC, are paid through the membership and registration dues of all B.C. nurses. We believe that nurses would prefer to have their money spent on programs and services that strengthen their practice, benefit patients and advance the profession. Many nurses have expressed their distress with this situation.

There are ample opportunities for these three organizations to work together in a positive and constructive way. Nurses and the healthcare system would benefit from strong nursing voices in British Columbia that includes the regulators, BCNU and the four existing professional associations for, respectively, RNs, RPNs, NPs and LPNs. Going forward, we hope that all nurses, including the leadership of the BCNU, recognize space for collaboration of all nursing organizations in B.C.

ARNBC has three requests of B.C. nurses. We ask that you:

1. Vote in the ARNBC elections to ensure that you and all B.C. nurses are represented on the board.
2. If you are able, attend the ARNBC AGM on May 28th. ([click for information](#))
3. Communicate your support for the Association – comment on our blog, tell a friend, share it on Facebook or Tweet.

We thank all those who stand with us – your voice is our strength.

Julie Fraser, RN

ARNBC President