

CNIA Newsblast: December BLAST



Happy Holidays from CNIA

I have mixed feelings as 2021 comes to an end, both enormous pride for the critical role nursing has played for yet another pandemic year, and sorrow at the ongoing personal and professional costs of this unwavering commitment. At the CNIA we know that nursing informatics will be essential to health systems around the world as we continue to meet COVID challenges and begin to plan for what comes next. Join us in 2022 as we pursue our vision: *Every nurse, every setting, optimizing informatics and digital health for all.* Our membership drive is on now - it's a great gift from you to you! I don't have much on my holiday wish list this year, already having the privilege to work with an amazing group of nurses dedicated to creating engaging and equitable spaces in which to advance the health of Canadians through the many, many innovative solutions nursing informatics has to offer! My thanks to our executive, council, and each CNIA member, especially our students for your creative energy and passion. I wish each of you and all our newsblast readers the very best for the holidays. May you find time for connection, rest, and rejuvenation for the year ahead. No matter what 2022 holds, we will be better equipped to meet it together and I look forward to the opportunities we have planned to connect with you all in the months ahead. Be safe and well. Happy holidays!

Tracie Risling
CNIA President

Profiling CNIA Board Members



Aimee Castro **Co-Treasurer**

How did you start your career in nursing? What first drew you to informatics?

I always wanted to work in healthcare with a focus on aging; I just wasn't sure exactly how to do so. I really appreciated my experiences as a family caregiver to my grandparents, as well as my work as a homecare provider. I realized that nursing education could give me the biopsychosocial knowledge needed to better support family caregiving and community care. The transdisciplinary aspects of nursing really appealed to me, too (think about it - in what situations or fields would nursing knowledge and skills NOT be helpful?).

Prior to entering nursing, I did a Master's degree in Health and Aging. I knew I wanted to do research in some capacity. These experiences led to my direct-entry Master's in Nursing, as well as my current PhD work.

My prior work as an entrepreneur teaching older adults to use computers first drew me to informatics. I taught a 65 year old man who had never used a computer before how to video call his daughter in Bahrain, in just 3 lessons. The ubiquity and power of these relatively easy-to-learn devices excited me. Smartphones and tablets are everywhere; I want to study them for their potential to better support family caregiving and community healthcare.

What was your first role in informatics?

My first role in informatics was teaching older adults how to use computers and iPads.

My first role as a nurse informaticist: my Master's in Nursing project explored how parents of children with a rare condition used the Internet and social media to support their family caregiving needs.

What is your current role and what is the focus of the role?

I'm a PhD candidate at the Ingram School of Nursing, McGill University in Montreal. I'm researching how to design a smartphone app to better coordinate respite care by nurses to families coping with cancer. Our research team is called *iRespite Services iRépit*, and we recently published our project proposal in [JMIR Research Protocols](#). If you're interested in learning more, please connect on Twitter ([@AimeeRCastro](#)) or keep an eye out for the December newsletter from the [McGill Council on Palliative Care](#), which will be sharing some of our work! I've also been the Co-Treasurer at CNIA for the past two years.

What key messages do you have for nurses interested in working in the informatics field?

For everyone: If you're interested in learning more about nursing informatics, join CNIA for webinars and networking; and look into [Coursera.org](#) for digital health courses. The Journal of Medical Internet Research has a new open-access Nursing journal. The University of Calgary Nursing program has a new digital health and innovation specialization...just keep looking. Informatics is so many things: data science, app design, science and technology studies, social media analyses... you're almost guaranteed to find something that interests you.

For current students: Reach out to professors. Try to find a research assistant position over the summer or an honors course. While you're in university might be the easiest way to get involved in nursing informatics.

For new grads and experienced nurses: See if there's an informatics project happening on your unit. Reach out to local professors. Also, see if there are any meetup groups in your area that could help you bring your own digital invention ideas into reality!

Final thoughts:

Remember that the vast majority of nurses and patients in Canada are using the Internet and smartphones. This creates exciting and important opportunities for expanding nursing work into the virtual sphere.



Manal Kleib
Co-Treasurer

How did you start your career in nursing? What first drew you to informatics?

I started my nursing career some thirty years ago as a bedside nurse in adult and neonatal intensive care. These technology-rich settings intrigued me as a new graduate because my

focus then was to develop my skills and know how to master these machines. After spending a couple of years there, I realized my practice was becoming rather task focused. I knew there was more to nursing and wanted to learn more. So, I sought more education while also continuing to practice in different settings and in various roles in both health service and academic organizations.

Completing my MBA increased my knowledge about healthcare management; and by reading the literature I came across the field of informatics, which was gaining momentum globally. Although I didn't quite understand what it entailed then, reading further into the literature asserted that the ongoing technological revolution would have consequences for healthcare. Shortly after that, I decided to pursue my PhD studies at the University of Alberta with a focus on health and nursing informatics.

What was your first role in informatics?

My early roles in informatics involved advocacy work that continues to the present day. For example, in collaboration with colleagues, I established the Nursing Informatics Association of Alberta shortly after completing my PhD studies and continued to work with the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta to develop additional educational resources for nurses. I also participated in several national level initiatives and projects led by the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing and Canada Health Infoway to increase nursing informatics capacity in Canada. For example, I took part in work related to the development and dissemination of the Nursing Informatics Entry-to-Practice Competencies for Registered Nurses in Canada, and mentored nursing educators through the Digital Health Faculty Peer Leader Network.

In terms of some formal roles, I worked with Alberta Health Services (AHS) as a health informatics consultant during the planning stages for deploying Connect Care, an Alberta-wide electronic medical record. Concurrently, I took on a Tenure Track appointment at the University of Alberta. The strategic alignment in these roles created multiple opportunities to influence policy and practice relative to nursing informatics education and research. For example, in collaboration with my colleague, Dr. Nagle, I led a research project to examine informatics preparedness among practising registered nurses in Alberta. Findings from this study were instrumental in informing the educational planning around e-competency requirements for Connect Care use by nurses. This research also led to the development and validation of the first Canadian Nurse Informatics Competency Assessment Scale, which also led to further research in which we refined this instrument more and tested it among senior-level nursing students in Alberta.

What is your current role and what is the focus of the role?

Currently, I am a Tenure Track Faculty at the University of Alberta leading a research program focused on preparing the nursing workforce for the digital health revolution. My program is largely informed by my own experiences with technology during my clinical practice in critical care as well as the experiences of my former and current students and the challenges they continue to face in learning about health technologies, both in Canada and other countries I worked in, which unfortunately were not always positive.

Through my research program I aim to enhance the preparedness of the nursing workforce and their capabilities to effectively integrate existing and emerging digital health technology in their practice roles to deliver high quality nursing care and achieve better outcomes for patients, providers, and health systems. To date, my team and I completed several research studies that provided empirical evidence regarding the current state and knowledge gaps relative to informatics and digital health preparedness among practising nurses and nursing students as well as current state within Canadian nursing education at the undergraduate level. We are now in the process of launching a new larger study funded through SSHRC

that will examine how students learn to provide nursing care in a digital health context. To learn more, you can check out my profile at: <https://apps.ualberta.ca/directory/person/kleib>. In addition to research, I supervise master's and PhD students and teach both, undergraduate and graduate level courses in the Faculty of Nursing, focused on innovation, technology, and leadership. I also serve on several committees/groups relevant to informatics and digital health and have been a co-treasurer for CNIA over the past two years.

I value the opportunities to network and collaborate with researchers, educators, students, clinicians, and policy makers, so please feel free to reach out via email at: manal.kleib@ualberta.ca

What key messages do you have for nurses interested in working in the informatics field?

I believe we are making great strides in Canada with respect to nursing informatics and digital health. A rewarding part of working in the field is that digital health provides unique opportunities for nurses to improve health outcomes, nursing knowledge and to advance professional practice roles, and I am excited to be working in such an evolving field. I encourage nursing students and nurses in all roles to invest in nursing informatics and contribute to shaping Canada's digital health future. A good starting point would be to consider joining CNIA and its affiliated jurisdictional associations to learn more about informatics and digital health as well as benefit from opportunities offered such as continuing education, networking, collaboration on projects and research. I also encourage nurses and students to consider having a graduate education in informatics because this would further enhance their potential to take on leadership roles within their organizations as well as equip them with essential skills needed to influence policy and practice. I encourage them to reach out to professors like myself to learn more and find some guided advice!

Final Thoughts:

Nurses manage a huge amount of data and information in every minute of their practice, which is what informatics is all about. However, nurses don't always give themselves credit for the great work they do. I would like to remind colleagues and future nurses that technologies are only tools that can help nurses provide care and manage complexity in a more efficient way. These technologies will continue to evolve and change over time- *What really matters is you, the nurse who is taking charge of these tools*. Over the past two years, nurses in Canada and worldwide have risen to the challenge and swiftly adapted to virtual care across practice settings. We need to build on these successes and work together to further advance nursing informatics roles so that our nurses continue to lead the way toward a better nursing and healthcare through digital health.

Webinar - InPlace Software: Overview of how placement software can be used within the academic institution coupled with integration to hospitals

Wednesday, February 9, 2022 - 2:00pm EST

InPlace Software is a modern (SAAS) technology platform supporting an enterprise model for managing student workplace experiences – ensuring visibility, coordination and efficiency for all participants fully supporting the placement/work experience lifecycle from start to finish.

InPlace Software supports the educator in building and managing a community of employers, enabling a single integrated database that maintains a record of all interactions with the institute's employer partners.

For an educator with many disciplines approaching employers for placements, a single consolidated repository of employer partners holding all student placement interactions is an invaluable resource.

Membership - Join or Renew

CNIA acts as the voice for Nursing Informatics in Canada. Join or renew your membership and take advantage of the many benefits offered:

- webinars focused on topics of interest to our membership. Recordings of the webinars are made available only to members afterwards
- networking opportunities
- monthly newsblasts containing association updates, board and member profiles, opportunities for informatics education offerings and more
- discounts on annual conference registration fees
- access to the website, including a Members Only section. The website is currently being updated to ensure it contains more and newer resources
- opportunities to become involved in and contribute to the national nursing informatics dialogue
- and more!

If you were a member in 2021, you should have received a reminder email from CNIA to renew. If you are joining as a new member, go to the [CNIA website](#).

Membership Type	Yearly Fee
Regular – Open to any registered nurses, Nurse Practitioners(NPs), registered psychiatric nurse, certified graduate nurse, registered practical nurse and licensed practical nurses in good standing with their provincial or territorial regulatory body.	\$113.00
Jurisdictional – Open to any member in good standing from a jurisdictional nursing informatics association. This subgroup provides members with full voting privileges in all association matters. Individual members may now obtain a discounted membership from their jurisdictional informatics association (in the form of scanned document confirming membership)	\$56.50
International Nurse – Open to registered &/or licensed to practice within their country other than Canada	\$113.00
Non-Nurse Professionals – Open to nurses (e.g., retired, non-practicing) without active jurisdictional membership, and all non-nurses.	\$113.00
Institutional – Level 1(5-9 members)/Level 2(10+members)- Open to any organization that employs registered nurses, registered psychiatric nurses, certified graduate nurses, and licensed practical nurses. If this subgroup is selected, then the “institution” provides for only 5 voting members. Not more than 1 institutional subgroup member shall hold office at any given time on behalf of their organization.	\$67.80/\$56.50
Full Time Student Nurse – students formally registered in a full-time accredited Nursing program	FREE

Annual Conference 2022!

Are you ready to join your nursing informatics colleagues on an inspiring journey and explore "The Digital Transformation of Nursing Practice"?

Come One - Come All to the virtual CNIA Conference - spring 2022!
Call for Abstracts will be announced in January of the new year.

We are looking for volunteers to assist with conference planning activities.

Please contact president-elect@cni.ca if you are interested in joining the team.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year from your CNIA Conference Planning committee!



On November 30, 2021 Digital Health Canada announced the names of those chosen as Women Leaders in Digital Health 2021.

Launched in 2017, the annual Women Leaders in Digital Health Award recognizes those visionaries who are harnessing the power of IT to transform Canadian health and healthcare.

The 2021 Women Leaders in Digital Health are:

Leaders

- **Lana Solberg**, Health Care Solutions & Partnerships Western Canada, Boehringer Ingelheim Canada Ltd. Read more about Lana's work [here >](#)
- **Annette Stelmachuk**, RN, Clinical Application Analyst, Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance. Read more about Annette's work [here >](#)

Executives

- **Sandra Cascadden**, Former Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Wellness, Province of Nova Scotia. Read more about Sandra's work [here >](#)
- **Tara Coxon**, Vice-President, Chief Information Officer, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton. Read more about Tara's work [here >](#)
- **Dr. Kayleigh Gordon**, Director of Client Experience and Curation, VITALL. Read more about Kayleigh's work [here >](#)
- **Michelle Mula**, Executive Director - Digital Health, Saskatchewan Health Authority. Read more about Michelle's work [here >](#)
- **Jackie Nelson**, Director, Strategic Initiatives, NorQuest College. Read more about Jackie's work [here >](#)
- **Megan Stowe**, Executive Director for Virtual Health and Clinical Informatics, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority. Read more about Megan's work [here >](#)

- **Alexis Villa**, Senior Program Director, Connected Care, University Health Network. Read more about Alexis' work [here >](#)



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Past-President Glynda Rees, representing CNIA, sits on the Public Health Agency of Canada's Expert Advisory Group for the Pan-Canadian Health Data Strategy. The [Expert Advisory Group Report #2](#) is now available and contains feedback received from across Canada, including a focus group that CNIA members participated in.

Have an informatics item of interest to our members or subscribers?
Send it along to: communications@cnia.ca

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