

Nursing Informatics Entry to Practice Competencies: What Does it Mean for Nursing Education and Practice? Part Two

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Trends and Issues in Nursing Informatics Column

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Melanie Neumeier is an Assistant Professor in the BScN Program at MacEwan University in Edmonton, AB. Her research interests include integrating new technologies into nursing education and interdisciplinary collaboration in enhancing evidence-informed nursing practice. Melanie first became interested in nursing informatics through a nursing informatics course she took in her MN program at Memorial University in Newfoundland, and has since continued that interest in her research, her writing, and her teaching.



COLUMN

In the last issue I discussed the nursing informatics entry to practice competencies and two of the resources available for nursing educators: the [Nursing Informatics Teaching Toolkit](#) (CASN, 2013) and [Consumer Health Solutions: A Teaching and Learning Resource for Nursing Education](#) (CASN, 2016). Both of these resources are designed to assist nurse educators in facilitating the development of the nursing informatics competencies in their students. But what about those nurses



already in practice? Many of us (myself included) graduated from basic nursing programs long before there were any e-learning or information – communication technologies (ICT) strategies embedded into the curriculum. So what do the competencies mean for us?

The Canadian Nurses Association has been very clear in both their position paper on Nursing Information and Knowledge Management (2006b) and in their E-Nursing Strategy (2006a) that competency in ICT is integral to safe nursing practice, and nurses in clinical settings are called to increase their competence to use ICT and to participate in the development of ICT initiatives. Some provincial regulatory bodies have also published position statements that reinforce the need for nurses to increase their competence and participation in ICT initiatives

with an emphasis that registered nurses must take responsibility for their own professional development needs (CARNA, 2009). So clearly, current practitioners are not off the hook when it comes to meeting the nursing informatics entry to practice competencies, but what resources do they have to assist them in building competence? Is there anything those of us with an interest in informatics can do to help?

These were the questions I was asking myself when I had the privilege to speak to Dr. Manal Kleib, an assistant professor at the University of Alberta who leads a research program in informatics. Dr. Kleib and Dr. Lynn Nagle, as a co-investigator, are working on a two-phase research project focused on Alberta's practicing nurses' informatics competencies. Phase one involved pilot testing of a nursing informatics self-assessment tool developed by the researchers based on the CASN entry-to-practice nursing informatics competency indicators. Phase two, currently in data collection stage, aims to assess nurses' self-perceived informatics competencies and factors associated with competency development. This type of research is essential to determine what supports practicing nurses actually need to help move the E-Nursing strategy forward. It also helps answer the CNA call to researchers to develop programs to optimize nurses' use of ICT. It is also a great avenue for those of us interested in nursing informatics to have access to an evidence-informed Canadian-based self-assessment tool to help guide our professional development in informatics.

So what can we do right now to meet our own professional development needs and increase our ICT proficiency? There are many resources out there that offer learning modules to help build informatics skills. Some great websites to check out include the CNA portal NurseOne, www.nurseone.ca; the Canadian Nursing Informatics Association, www.cnia.ca or through COACH, www.coachorg.com

While things can sometimes seem more challenging for us as digital immigrants, it is nice to know that we are not alone and there are people and resources available to help us.

References

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Back to Index

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A photograph of three nurses in scrubs. One nurse in the foreground is looking at a smartphone. Two other nurses in the background are holding clipboards and looking towards the camera.

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