Greetings from your Board of Directors!

After what has seemed to be a very long and cold winter, spring is finally on the horizon and we look forward to the colors and sounds that announce the change of season. Spring is always an exciting time for AAACN as we continue to work on our strategic plan and initiatives to serve our members, expand our influence, and strengthen our core, as we anticipate coming together for the annual conference. And there are more of us than ever! AAACN reached a milestone at the end of 2013. More than 1,800 members renewed in December and we had the most new members ever at 1,201! Today we are 3,031 members strong and growing!! What a great testament to our organization and our members! Ambulatory nurses join AAACN to connect with others in similar roles and to network about common problems and solutions, to advance their practice and leadership skills through opportunities to collaborate with other leaders and mentors, and to advocate for the specialty of ambulatory care nursing locally and nationally.

Retention of current members and recruitment of new members, especially those of the more recent generations, is and has been one of our strategic objectives for the organization. The board has been discussing leadership development of the new and emerging leaders of AAACN and succession planning for the future. This will be a theme of our board meeting in New Orleans. If you want to be part of the leadership of the future, find a way to get involved with the organization. Join a committee, SIG, or a task force. Prepare a poster or podium presentation for the annual conference. Become involved in a local networking group or start one in your area. You may not desire to be a board member or the president, but there are plenty of leadership opportunities outside of those roles. Remember, as ambulatory care nurses, we are all leaders!

I had the pleasure of participating in a first for the nursing organizations that are managed by Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc. The leaders of six nursing organizations participated: AAACN, Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses (AMSN), American Nephrology Nurses’ Association (ANNA), American Nursing Informatics Association (ANIA), Gerontology Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA), and the Society of Urology Nurses and Associates (SUNA). Each organization provided information about their members and the major issues they are concerned about: low membership, engaging younger members, and developing new leaders. Opportunities for collaboration were discussed with the following suggestions brought forward: consider sharing speakers, making our Online Libraries available to each other, sharing technology best practices, and pursuing joint marketing of programs and products through our e-newsletters. Leveraging our resources and sharing the expertise of colleagues is a great first step. Further conference calls and discussions about future collaboration are planned.

Collaboration is an important concept for AAACN this year. The first Ambulatory Care Certification Intensive CE Series in partnership with Gannett Education was offered in January and February. Approximately 60 participants engaged in five webinars and completed four reading modules in preparation to take the Ambulatory Care Certification exam. The series was so successful that four more series are planned for 2014. In addition to the Ambulatory Care Certification review course offered at the annual conference and at various sites...
around the country, or the recorded course offered in the Online Library, the series provides other options for those interested in becoming certified in ambulatory care.

AAACN continues to collaborate with the American Nurses Association (ANA) on the development of Nurse Sensitive Indicators (NSI) for ambulatory care. The AAACN NSI Task Force, begun last year, has had an ANA staff member participating since its inception. Seven representatives from AAACN attended a national Summit in January and served as subject matter experts in the discussion and identification of a preliminary set of indicators that are meaningful in ambulatory care. See the cover article to learn how this important work is developing.

Care Coordination and Transition Management (CCTM) has been a major focus of AAACN’s efforts and resources for the past few years. Four separate expert panels consisting of members and non-members collaborated on this project. One group reviewed the existing literature on care coordination, a second group identified nine core dimensions and created a table of evidence, and the third group defined core competencies for each of the dimensions. The work continued by a fourth panel with the development of a core curriculum for CCTM with expected publication in June and the CCTM course, which debuted with the Introductory module in February. Because Care Coordination has been a topic of discussion in all health care environments, especially since the inception of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, resources to assist nurses and organizations in preparing for and creating these roles for registered nurses have been sporadic. The availability of the CCTM core curriculum and course to all nurses and health care organizations will help to define the roles and skills required to serve in this important position now and in the future.

As my presidency is winding down and I reflect on all that has happened this past year, I am grateful for the members of this organization who have given of their time and talent to accomplish all of the things mentioned above. It is an honor to represent such a dedicated and committed group of individuals who find or make time in their busy work and personal lives to impact the lives of patients and colleagues through their work on these projects and initiatives. The word is out...we ARE ambulatory care!

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