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First Quarter 2004 - Volume 5, Number 1

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■ A bridge across the chasm:

A new report that brings ideas and evidence to nursing's most important challenges

The recent report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies titled Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses puts forth a conclusion that most nurses will readily agree with: The safety of patients suffers when nurses work excessively long hours or attempt to care for too many patients. What to do about it is among the most pressing questions in nursing and all of health care. It's also the focus of this edition of *Excellence*.

The report identifies solutions to problems in hospital, nursing home and other health care organization work environments that threaten patient safety through their effect on nursing care. The report focuses on four areas: management, workforce deployment, work design and organizational culture. The report presents evidence from health services, behavioral and organizational research, and human factors and engineering to address pressing public-policy questions, including nurse staffing levels, nurse work hours and mandatory overtime.

Using the report's solutions as a starting point, nurses in clinical practice, administration, education and research have been invited to respond to the report and balance the recommendations with their own work. *Excellence* spoke with members of the work group that developed the report and nurses moving toward transforming the report's recommendations into dynamic form in hospitals, long-term care facilities and schools of nursing.

[Read the feature.](#)

[Greg Perry](#)

Editor

■ Also in Excellence

Introducing *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing*

There is a new resource for evidence-based nursing knowledge from a source you trust. *Worldviews on*

■ In This Issue

**An entirely new form of *Excellence*:
Shaped by your peers.
Shaped by you.**

With this issue, *Excellence* enters an exciting transition. We have re-imagined what this publication can be, and should be. Beginning in July, we will be giving the *Excellence* forum to the nurses who are creating evidence-driven excellence in their own institutions. It's a new way to get nursing's best ideas into schools, clinical units, and boardrooms. [Read more about it now.](#)

Complexity reigns:

Academics, researchers, professional associations, philanthropic organizations and other organizational leaders within the health care industry are called on to collaborate and address complex work environment issues. Read about the recommendations and investigations already underway to support safety-driven change within organizations. [Read the feature.](#)

In *Excellence in Nursing Administration*

It's the nurses: In precise

Have a comment or question? Share it in the forum.

There is a special section of the online forum devoted to Excellence and to the articles you see here. You can post a comment or question, and engage other members who are sharing their own. [Go there now!](#)

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Evidence-Based Nursing is a quarterly, peer-reviewed nursing journal and information resource that is co-published by Sigma Theta Tau International and Blackwell Publishing. It will offer the most current and comprehensive knowledge synthesis and best evidence available, including specific recommendations and guidelines that support the implementation of best practice. [Read the article.](#)



Sigma Theta Tau International launches new subsidiary

Nursing Knowledge International (NKI), a subsidiary of Sigma Theta

Tau International, is set to be fully operational in mid-April. The Web portal will provide a single point of access to the latest in evidence-based nursing, career development, education, and knowledge-enhancing tools and resources available through the Internet. NKI has been created solely to provide the knowledge that nurses need in their pursuit to help others. [Read the article.](#)

24x7 access to the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* now available

The value of your membership has been increased yet again because the *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* is now available online. [Go here](#) to learn more. So, in addition to receiving this respected journal quarterly in the mail, you can now access *JNS Online* via the Member Community with the click of a mouse. And, it's free! Check out the latest in nursing research today!

CE as career accelerant: One chapter's story

Members of Theta Tau Chapter, based at Georgia College and State University, were searching for ways to give meaning to active membership, promote the mission of furthering nursing excellence through nursing leadership and research, and promote professionalism and competence through national certification and continuing education. Through a detailed and methodical process, the chapter created a continuing education (CE) program that has brought chapter members together and, just as importantly, modeled a path for nurses to take as they develop their careers. [Read the article.](#)

Anticipating the 15th International Nursing Research Congress

More than 750 abstracts, from 27 countries all over the world, were submitted for the 15th International Nursing Research Congress, "Building Community Through Research," which will take place 22-24 July in Dublin, Ireland. This is more than twice the submissions for the 2003 congress. Leading up to the congress will be a two-day, hands-on, evidence-based practice workshop, that will be presented by faculty from the University of Iowa College of Nursing, to take place on 19-20 July, with a one-day Evidence-Based Practice Preconference on 21

and direct language, the IOM report recommends that the work environment of nurses needs to be substantially transformed to better protect patients from health care errors. Read about recommendations that call for changes in nurse staffing levels and mandatory limits on nurses' work hours as part of a comprehensive plan to reduce problems that threaten patient safety. [Read the feature.](#)

In *Excellence in Clinical Practice*

Culture matters: The report calls for changes in management, workforce deployment and work design. It also challenges the administrator to develop a culture of safety. Read about the recommendations and hear from nurse leaders piloting change. [Read the feature.](#)



[Read a Review](#)

[Pinnacle Awards Entry Deadline – April 15, 2004](#)

[New Book:](#)
[Pivotal Moments in Nursing](#)

July. [Read the article.](#)

More than 9,000 online disaster courses completed
“Disaster Preparedness and Response for Nurses” is an online case study offered free to all nurses. This case study, developed jointly by Sigma Theta Tau International and the American Red Cross, has been completed by more than 9,000 nurses and other health care workers. Read about what’s next for this important partnership. [Read the article.](#)

EPA seeking names for Aging Initiative Listserver
Sigma Theta Tau International is collaborating with the EPA to develop strategies and actions that help nurses understand and respond to environmental hazards that affect elderly Americans. Honor Society members are invited to add their names to the Aging Initiative Listserver so they can remain informed of developments in the program. [Read the article.](#)

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First Quarter 2004 - Volume 5, Number 1

■ **Complexity reigns:**

IOM report calls on educators and nurse scientists to teach, support and lead complex health care organizations toward safer patient care

A newly published report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies (IOM) recommends that nurses' work environments be re-envisioned and re-engineered in order to improve patient safety. The report, *Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses*, also calls upon academics, researchers, professional associations, philanthropic organizations and other organizational leaders within the health care industry to collaborate on developing studies that address complex work environment issues and on developing scientific inquiries that take a broad, system-wide view.

It's not clinical research as typically defined but research that generates evidence for both clinicians and administrators to use as they pilot safety-driven change within organizations.

"Evidence-based management is beginning to penetrate both academia and administration," says [Brenda K. Zierler](#), RN, PhD, associate professor at the University of Washington. "But for it to really penetrate, it will require some dramatic reorganization within both. It's not just a course or a buzzword. It has to be a mission."

This report calls attention to several areas in which, at present, information is limited about how to design nurses' work and work environments to make them safer for patients. Research is needed to provide better information on nursing-related errors, means of achieving safer work processes and work space design,

■ **Crossing the quality chasm: The IOM health care quality initiative**

In 1996, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) launched a concerted, ongoing effort focused on assessing and improving the nation's quality of care, which is now in its third phase.

The first phase of this quality initiative documented the serious and pervasive nature of the nation's overall quality problem, concluding that "the burden of harm conveyed by the collective impact of all of our health care quality problems is staggering." The initial report *Ensuring Quality Cancer Care* documented the wide gulf that exists between ideal cancer care and the reality many Americans with cancer experience.

During the second

a standardized approach to measuring patient acuity, information on safe staffing levels for different types of patient care units, effective methods to help night shift workers compensate for fatigue, information on what limits should be imposed on successive days of working sustained work hours, and collaborative models of care.

The report also suggests that research that investigates what other health care organizations (HCOs) have found successful in improving patient safety be disseminated to help other HCOs become learning organizations—organizations that embrace relevant evidence and continually add to their repertoire of patient safety practices.

Nurses throughout health care and academia are well-positioned to help HCOs become learning organizations, says [Barbara Mark](#), RN, PhD, FAAN, the Sarah Frances Russell distinguished professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. “Studies of this scope are a long way from the bedside and complex in concept and methodologies, but nurses know patient care, and they know what goes on in clinical units. That puts them in a strong position to evaluate how care is organized and delivered across systems.”

Mark also urges nurses who embark on ambitious, system-focused studies to broaden their team of co-investigators. “Include economists, sociologists, administrators, organizational behavior experts and other disciplines that have the necessary perspectives to understand and evaluate complex systems.”

Treating deep vein thrombosis: One system studied

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) is a disease that not only has a wide variety of potential risk factors, it can also appear in several clinical units within a hospital, making it an ideal diagnosis to study multidisciplinary care, according to Zierler, who led an investigation on how care was delivered across the University of Washington Medical Center. Using her data as an evidence platform, Zierler initiated a multifaceted quality improvement project aimed at improving response and outcomes.

phase, spanning 1999-2001, the Committee on Quality of Health Care in America laid out a vision for how the health care system and related policy environment must be radically transformed in order to close the chasm between what we know to be good quality care and what actually exists in practice. The reports released during this phase—*To Err is Human: Building a Safer Health System* and *Crossing the Quality Chasm: A New Health System for the 21st Century*—stress that reform around the margins is inadequate to address system ills.

To Err is Human put the spotlight on how tens of thousands of Americans die each year from medical errors and effectively put the issue of patient safety and quality on the radar screen of public and private policymakers. The *Quality Chasm* report described broader quality issues and defines six aims: Care should be safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable.

Phase three of the IOM’s quality initiative focuses on operationalizing the

“It’s a disease that can show up about anywhere: in oncology, in ob/gyn, in emergency, in a clinic and of course in the vascular lab. And as such, there’s no specialty that can solely own the expertise,” says Zierler. “It’s really a system response, and even in a magnet hospital like ours, the system needed improvement.”

Zierler surveyed each area of the hospital that cared for a DVT patient and found uneven knowledge of the disease and treatment pathways. “We were seeing very uneven treatment after patients left the vascular lab. We uncovered significant disconnects in understandings of how to best deliver care, how diagnostic and care decisions were communicated, follow up and patient education and even facility problems.”

After compiling her results that included the survey data and a comprehensive analysis of outcomes of DVT patients cared for through the hospital, she presented to the risk management team and, according to Zierler, “opened some eyes.”

It’s not a story with a happy ending, however. In collaboration with pharmacists, administrators and the medical staff, Zierler developed a comprehensive program of improvement that included disease education, algorithms to guide nurses in the administration of heparin, patient education and more. But the very nature of the problem—its cross-unit nature—proved resistant to long-term change. “A system-oriented improvement requires exceptional dedication and leadership. And even in a magnet hospital there can be significant factors that intrude on success. It’s important work for nurses to commit to. But it’s also important for them to understand the complexity and to create interdisciplinary teams that also create lots of allies. Don’t go it alone.”

Getting staffing right

Staffing levels are determined, appropriately or not, through a combination of regulatory, internal HCO and marketplace approaches. The report recognizes that each of these approaches has strengths as well as limitations—concluding that their coordinated and combined use holds the most promise for achieving safe

vision of a future health system described in the Quality Chasm report. *Keeping Patients Safe: Transforming the Work Environment of Nurses* is one of several reports to be developed as part of the third phase.

All reports are available at the IOM Web site: <http://www.iom.edu/>

■ A Report of Arista 3



During a three-year period, 109 health care experts and reactors representing nursing, medicine, health policy, government, economics and finance, administration, and nongovernmental organizations assembled via a series of five global think-tank meetings to develop strategies for changing nursing practice. The 68-page Arista3 report documents common current and emerging nursing and health care themes, as well as region-specific challenges, in Africa and the Near East, Europe, the Pacific Rim, the

staffing levels. But what data is driving those decisions?

The report asks the question by taking particular note of the need for more accurate and reliable staffing data for hospitals and nursing homes to help make these efforts more effective. General staffing studies are called for, as well as more research on staffing for specific types of patient care units, such as medical-surgical and labor and delivery units.

Mark and her colleagues are already underway.

She was the principal investigator on Outcomes Research in Nursing Administration (ORNA), an examination of the professional nursing practices in 67 U. S. hospitals that was funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research. In that study, published in April of 2003 in the *Journal of Nursing Administration* (Marks, 2003), a longitudinal design was developed, as well as a statistical methodology that accommodates multiple points and levels of care within an HCO. Now, with an NINR grant to keep the study funded through 2007, she is leading ORNA II.

“We’ve just begun collecting data from 160 randomly identified hospitals throughout the country,” said Mark. “We’re measuring staffing four times within a six-month period and gathering survey data on nursing practices and attitudes, as well as comprehensive outcome data.” Mark is clear, however, that the team is not measuring information regarding hospital nurse staffing policies.

Mark is also leading a study funded through an Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) grant that examines the complex relationships among hospital nurse staffing, quality of care and financial performance. Mark and her colleagues reported in the *Journal of Healthcare Financial Management* that while hospital operating costs increased with higher staffing levels, there was no statistically significant change in their profit margins.

According to Mark, “Nurses have an intuitive sense of where to find the improvements that lead to better care, and staffing is usually near the top of the list. But

Americas and the Caribbean.

[Click here](#) to read copy of the executive summary.

The full report is available for purchase at the [society website](#).

Non-members \$30 each
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intuition isn't data. We're trying to arm nurses and administrators with the evidence required to build satisfying workplaces that also support the delivery of exceptional care.”

Mark, B. (2003). Professional nursing practice: Impact on organizational and patient outcomes. *The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 33(4), 224-234.

[Dr. Sharon Hudacek](#), author of *Making a Difference: Stories from the Point of Care*, is preparing a book of daily inspirational readings for nurses to be published by Sigma Theta Tau International. Do you have an inspirational poem, quotation, or short story that you would like to be considered for inclusion in this publication? Please contact Dr. Hudacek at (570) 941-4197 or by [completing a form](#).

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■ **An entirely new form of *Excellence*: Shaped by your peers. Shaped by you.**

Nursing is facing many challenges, all of them familiar to the readers of *Excellence*. The solutions are, by necessity, as complex as the challenge. Indeed, there are no easy answers. There is, however, an abundance of brilliant leaders armed with powerful ideas. And now, their time has come.

A new generation of this publication, to be known as *Excellence in Nursing Knowledge*, will debut in July of this year. The just-posted series of *Excellence* issues are the final installments created for career-specific audiences. Our focus now will be squarely on the nurse leaders who are creating essential transformation where nurses work and learn. With each new issue, we'll hand the reins to a nurse at the forefront of change. In doing so, we're also creating a totally new kind of online publication.

Introducing the *Excellence* guest editors

Excellence in Nursing Knowledge (ENK) will be a monthly, online publication that introduces readers to best practices and evidence-driven processes as identified by an individual nurse.

Each month, a new *Excellence* guest editor will use the forum to present and explore ideas that are improving care – and how care is delivered – in his or her institution. ENK will present the professional voices of evidence, tested by application and offering value to the rest of nursing.

Yearly and trial subscriptions will be available for both Sigma Theta Tau International members and nonmembers. Free summaries will be published each quarter.

Adding a new dimension to important reports

ENK will use several recent reports from the Institute of Medicine and the AONE, among others, as touchstones for content. A focus on work environment issues, organizational culture, and nurse leadership will be evident. Where each issue takes you will be up to the *Excellence* guest editors.

Interested in an issue? Let's begin a conversation.

The publication team of ENK is now gathering names of nurses interested in learning

more about the guest editor process. Send a letter of introduction to the ENK managing editor, Greg Perry . In reply, we'll send you the guidelines and an editorial calendar. It's a dynamic opportunity to present effective ideas and actions within your institution to nurse leaders around the globe.

We invite you to join us, as a reader, as a participant in the dialogue, as one of a select group of guest editors.

■ Discover Evidence-Based Nursing Today



First issue now available!

Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing[™] is your new resource for evidence-based nursing knowledge from a source you trust! This quarterly, peer-reviewed nursing journal and information resource is a product of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau

International and Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Leading the 23-person editorial board—with members literally spanning the globe—are Jo Rycroft-Malone, RN, PhD, of the Royal College of Nursing Institute in Oxford, England; Tracey Bucknall, RN, PhD, of the University of Melbourne in Carlton, Victoria (Australia); and Bernadette Mazurek Melnyk, PhD, CPNP, NPP, FAAN, of the University of Rochester School of Nursing in Rochester, New York (USA). Written especially for clinicians, educators, researchers, nurse leaders and policymakers, each issue of *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing* provides articles and features on today's best practices in evidence-based nursing. Available in both print and electronic versions, *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing* offers the most current and comprehensive knowledge synthesis and best evidence available, including specific recommendations and guidelines that support the implementation of best practice.

Take advantage of our special introductory offer for individual subscriptions—eight issues for the price of six—a 25% savings off of our regular subscription price! Click [here](#) for details.

■ Sigma Theta Tau International subsidiary 'helps nurses help others'



Designed solely to provide knowledge that nurses need in their pursuit to help others, Nursing Knowledge International, a subsidiary of Sigma Theta Tau International, is set to be fully operational in mid-April. You will have a single point of access to the latest in evidence-based nursing, career development, education, and knowledge-

enhancing tools and resources available through the Internet.

Announced Nov. 5, 2003, in his call-to-action address, honor society President Dan Pesut, PhD, APRN, BC, FAAN, said, "As leaders in nursing, we have a responsibility to spark the renewal of the global community of nurses through shared nursing knowledge work."

Nursing Knowledge International will deliver high-quality, nurse-centric information from leading nursing providers, including nursing associations and for-profit companies. Its offerings will include continuing education, books, journals, CD-ROMs, software and distance learning, to name a few. Content will be both free and fee-based.

Executive director Bob Gallup says, "Nursing Knowledge International provides differentiated, value-added, easy-to-navigate content to serve a global community of nurses in their pursuit of knowledge for personal and professional development." Content on the Web portal is divided into four areas: career and leadership development, clinical information, continuing education, and research materials.

Gallup assures Sigma Theta Tau International members they will find nursing content just a click away, with the price and service they expect from the honor society. Currently, the portal offers exclusive Sigma Theta Tau International products and services, but it will be fully operational in mid-April and highlight partner organizations' products and services as well. To visit the site and register for a pre-launch preview, [click here](#).

■ Promoting recruitment, retention, collegiality and professionalism using continuing education plans: A report from Theta Tau Chapter

By [Sandra Copeland](#), RN, BC, MSN,. Vice President of Theta Tau Chapter, Clinical Nurse Specialist

With the current nursing shortage, rising health care costs and aging workforce, health care professionals are forced to explore new ideas for recruitment and retention of nurses to fill the gaps. In addition, the nurses will have to be educated, competent and professional to keep up in today's competitive high-tech market (Monarch, 2003).

Hospitals have been trying sign-on bonuses, free parking, retention bonuses, flexible scheduling, on-site daycare and every other perk they can think of to recruit and retain nurses. Most recently is the Magnet Recognition Program, which is administered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2002). There has been research to suggest these hospitals experience better outcomes for patients and nurses. These facts

include a lower turnover rate, lower needle-stick injury rates, lower mortality and retention above the national average of nurses (Aiken, Sloane & Klocinski, 1997). One of the outcomes of the Magnet Recognition Program has been the identification of ways to promote professionalism and ensure nurses are kept up to date via continuing education, national certifications and clinical competencies (American Nurses Credentialing Center, 2002).

The importance of association

Many hospitals have begun to form partnerships with schools of nursing, government leaders and businesses for joint financing of faculty, grants for tuition, equipment and buildings. The link most often left out of the loop, however, is the professional nursing organization. These groups have a mission to promote nursing excellence, lobby for nurse-friendly laws and link nurses together for the advancement of the profession.

One chapter's story

Theta Tau Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International is based at Georgia College and State University. Chapter members were searching for ways to give meaning to active membership, promote the mission of furthering nursing excellence through nursing leadership and research, and promote professionalism and competence through national certification and continuing education. A subcommittee was formed and pursued options to fulfill these missions.

The first step was to do background research and benchmarking to see what other organizations were doing to meet these needs. The next step was the development of goals for the project:

- Assist Theta Tau members in obtaining continuing education credits.
- Promote professional nursing practice, scholarship, excellence and quality nursing care.
- Join outside organizations in promoting nursing practice and competence.
- Promote member involvement and growth opportunities.
- Facilitate members in obtaining or retaining certifications in professional nursing.
- Foster mentor relationships within the chapter and local nursing community.
- Keep members abreast of current nursing research and practice trends.

The chapter approved the goals, and the project moved forward. The subcommittee utilized the expertise of education specialists at local hospitals to develop a needs assessment for the chapter to use to determine what topics, learner style and preferences would be appropriate. The subcommittee then analyzed the results of the needs assessment to determine the layout of the education calendar for the upcoming year for the chapter.

The group brainstormed other ways to make CE affordable and accessible to members. Nursing faculty and local staff nurses researched and found links to World Wide Web sites offering free CE courses online on a wide range of topics. The chapter's informatics

staff then added links or shortcuts to these sites along with a description of the offering. A suggestion was made to have a “work session” where members met to take CE courses that were offered in nursing journals in their selected areas of interest. They would then submit the test and fees for credit to the chapter. This was to promote networking across employers and facility and professional boundaries and would help foster mentoring to newer nurses.

The chapter also wanted to promote scholarship and wanted the members to grow and develop professionally. One proposal built into the project was for members to develop a CE offering to present to the chapter. As sponsor, the chapter would be responsible for paying dues for credit to the state nursing association, and the subcommittee would in turn mentor the presenter through the process of developing the CE. A positive side note to this proposal was that the CE offering could be used as a fund-raiser for the chapter by charging nonmembers and rewarding active members by allowing them free admission for CE credit.

The chapter also felt that national nursing certification was important for nursing competence, morale, recruitment and retention. The decision was made to assist active members to obtain and/or retain national certification in their nursing area of specialty. The availability of CE credit offered by the chapter would assist in maintaining required CE hours mandated by most certification bodies. Since many employers no longer pay or reimburse for certification fees, the chapter felt it would be important to financially assist those members who wished to obtain or retain certification. The group developed criteria for eligibility for chapter members and created an application for submission for approval by the subcommittee. The application and criteria were then placed on the Theta Tau home page to be available to print, submit or view.

Involvement and attendance on the rise

While this project is still evolving, the chapter members' involvement and attendance at meetings have increased. The members who prepare CE offerings and utilize CE programs help to grow professional nurses, and this benefits the community. For example, several members are Basic Life Support (BLS) or CPR instructors but have not been actively involved in chapter activities. After learning about the new service and growth-oriented project, they became more involved and recruited friends to get involved again. They are setting up community BLS courses and BLS CE courses to be eligible for certification reimbursement. Theta Tau members participating in this project have also capitalized on the opportunity to use the process as an aid to clinical ladder progression in their facilities.

As members began participating in these projects, local health care organizations began seeing these members doing projects, going above and beyond the call of duty, conducting research, making presentations and taking many other career-enhancing opportunities. It became a way to recruit nurses and provide ideas on how the role of nurses might be enhanced in their facilities. Nurses began networking with each other, and friendships, employment and innovative nursing practices began to emerge. In addition, students about to graduate were able to network with managers, and managers

were able to recruit graduates. Managers felt good about hiring members involved in professional nursing activities, and the students were excited about working for a manager who supported professional nursing functions.

Future goals of the chapter include further partnering with health care facilities to assist in funding, participation in research, CE offerings, and educating and impacting legislation affecting nursing and/or health care.

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■ Nurse scientists look to Ireland: Anticipating the 15th International Nursing Research Congress



Anticipation is growing as plans are underway for the 15th

International Nursing Research Congress.

More than 750 abstracts, from 27 countries all over the world, were submitted for the 15th International Nursing Research Congress, which will take place 22-24 July in Dublin, Ireland. This is more than double the submissions for the 2003 congress.

As preparations are made for the largest congress ever, additional concurrent and poster viewing session times have been added to the schedule to accommodate more presenters. Congress attendees will have more sessions to choose from and can earn up to 25.2 continuing education contact hours.

This year's congress, "Building Community Through Research," will be preceded by the Evidence-Based Practice Preconference, as well as a new, two-day evidence-based practice hands-on workshop presented by faculty from the University of Iowa College of Nursing.

■ Show us your award entry Pinnacle Awards Entry Deadline – April 15, 2004



When Carrie Stricker, MSN, CRNP, AOCN, Xi Chapter, accepted the

2002 Region 12 Pinnacle Award for Research Utilization at the Chapter Leader Academy in June 2002, little did she predict she and her group would take the stage as the international award winner at the tribute luncheon of the 37th Biennial Convention in Toronto last November.

The Research Utilization Award, as described in the honor society's biennial convention program, recognizes an individual or group that has developed an outstanding practical application of nursing research. This research has improved the health of the public or has promoted institution-wide programs for use in research in clinical practice.

Stricker accepted the International Research Utilization Award as co-chair of the University of Pennsylvania Medical Center Oncology Oral Care Workgroup, whose entry, "Show Me Evidence: Using an Evidence-Based Practice Model to Develop an Oncology

The hands-on workshop is aimed at guiding nurses to guide staff nurses in the integration of evidence-based knowledge into their own practice. Prerequisite readings and a clinical topic for development at the workshop are expected.

The Second International Evidence-Based Nursing Preconference will feature two keynote speakers. Jo Rycroft-Malone, RN, PhD, editor of *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing* and senior research fellow, Knowledge Utilisation & Transfer, Royal College of Nursing Institute, will open the preconference. The closing speaker is Carl Thompson, RN, PhD, BA, Department of Health senior research fellow at the Centre for Evidence-Based Nursing, University of York, United Kingdom, and adjunct professor, University of Alberta, Canada.

Keynote speakers for the congress are Nico Oud, RN, N.Adm, MNSc, director, Oud Consultancy, and Dr. Christopher Johns, reader, University of Luton.

The congress will be held at the Burlington Hotel, Dublin's largest hotel. The Burlington is located in one of Dublin's most attractive Georgian districts, close to the city center. Many attractions are just a short walk from the hotel.

Allow extra time in Ireland for sightseeing. Take a 45-minute tour of Dublin Castle, the center of British rule in Ireland for 700 years, to explore its history and elegant rooms. Visit Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin's first church, and nearby St. Patrick's Cathedral to enjoy the history and architecture. Relax

Oral Care Clinical Practice Guideline," won the 2003 International Award for Research Utilization.

As a regional and international winner, Stricker, along with co-chair Jacqueline Sullivan, RN, PhD, Delta Tau Chapter, was thrilled with the recognition: "It was a tremendous honor to have been recognized on both the regional and international levels, and was deeply gratifying to our workgroup that our efforts and commitment to evidence-based practice would garner such esteem. It motivated our team in moving forward to accomplish greater work within our institution, as well as propelled us forward to disseminate our work through publications and international presentations."

All 2002 Pinnacle Award winners, such as the Oral Care Workgroup's nomination, were automatically entered into the 2003 international awards program. Through both the Pinnacle and International awards, the Oral Care Workgroup was recognized as "an outstanding example of the integration of nursing research into clinical practice across diverse settings in a major health care system. Utilizing a multidisciplinary process and a well-designed evidence-based utilization framework, the authors developed a clinical practice guideline based on synthesis and evaluation of a wealth of research in oncology oral care. The guidelines have been integrated into nursing practice manuals, assessment tools, and patient education materials. Implementation of the Oral Care Clinical Practice Guideline has had a positive impact on the quality of patient care, and research studies to evaluate its effectiveness on specific clinical outcomes are being conducted."

and take a break in St. Stephens Green, a lush, 22-acre park in the heart of Dublin. Learn about Ireland's most famous beer on the Guinness Storehouse tour, and enjoy a pint at the Gravity Bar, high atop the Guinness building. Tour Trinity College, Ireland's most prestigious college, and view the famous Book of Kells.

For more information or to register for the Dublin research events, please visit <http://www.nursingsociety.org/>.

■ Add your name. Stay informed.
EPA seeking names for Aging Initiative Listserver

The Aging Initiative Listserver is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to raise awareness about the susceptibility of older persons to environmental hazards and to share information on strategies to reduce or prevent exposure. The listserver is a vehicle for the posting of news and information on the Aging Initiative.

Sigma Theta Tau International is collaborating with the EPA to develop strategies and actions that help nurses understand and respond to environmental hazards that affect elderly Americans.

If you're interested in knowing about developments in the programs as they are posted, visit the [Aging Initiative Listserver Web](#) page.

Entries for the 2004 Pinnacle Awards will be received through April 15, 2004.

[Criteria and entry forms](#) for awards recognizing individuals, chapters, and groups for chapter accomplishments, mentoring, research, media, and technology are available on the society web site. www.nursingsociety.org/ programs. Nominations will be judged in May 2004 and winners notified in June 2004.

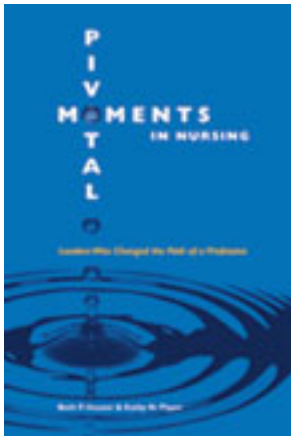
The 2004 Pinnacle Award winners will be automatically entered in the Honor Society of Nursing's 2005 international awards program, which will recognize winners during the November 2005 biennial convention in Indianapolis, Ind. For more information about the 2004 Pinnacle Awards, please contact Angela Miller, manager of constituent involvement, at angela@stti.iupui.edu, or [Kelly Kijovsky](#), constituent involvement specialist, at kellyk@stti.iupui.edu.

■ More than 9,000 online disaster courses completed



In January of 2003, the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International and the American Red Cross jointly developed [“Disaster Preparedness and Response for Nurses,”](#) an online case study offered free and available to all nurses at the society web site. The case study—designed to help nurses everywhere better understand their role in disasters related to terrorism, weapons of mass

Pivotal Moments in Nursing: Leaders Who Changed the Path of a Profession



*Available April 2004

Designed to inspire nursing professionals worldwide to step into leadership roles, this book traces the paths of 12 legendary yet contemporary nurse leaders through the pivotal times in their lives that helped transform them into leaders, and thereby change the face of nursing. Through thought-provoking essays and follow-up questions, this book will challenge the old thinking that leaders are born with a path and a vision laid out for them. You will see how Loretta Ford, in response to a health care provider crisis, transformed the nursing profession and initiated a paradigm shift that changed the delivery of health care; how Gretta Styles' decision not to become a nun started her on the path to being an internationally recognized expert in nursing regulation and credentialing; how Sue Donaldson helped define the discipline of nursing through the course of daily cafeteria conversations; and how Luther Christman confronted discrimination and changed legislation and minds everywhere. Each of the 12 essays reveals as much about the individuals as about the art of being a leader. Learn the lessons of these leaders and take the challenge that their experiences offer.

destruction or natural events—provides two hours of continuing education credit.

To date, more than 9,000 disaster courses have been completed, and the feedback has been extremely positive. One nurse wrote, “Very informative, easy to follow and understand. Made me realize what I can do in my community.” A nursing educator wrote, “I used this CE offering for an activity for RN-BSN students to enhance their work on disaster management in community health nursing. Thank you for this excellent learning experience.”

“We are thrilled that so many nurses are committed to educating themselves about being prepared to help in the event of a disaster,” said Nancy McKelvey, RN, MSN, chief nurse of the American Red Cross and a Sigma Theta Tau member. “Clearly, there is a real need and a genuine desire for this type of continuing education.”

“Because of the wonderful success of the case studies and the critical importance of providing education on disaster preparedness, the honor society and the American Red Cross are developing additional disaster case studies on mental health, radiation and shelter nursing, including sheltering in place as might happen in response to a SARS epidemic,” said Linda Finke, RN, PhD, Sigma Theta Tau International’s director of professional development services.

For more information, [click here](#).

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