PRESIDENTS’ MESSAGES
Reflecting back and planning forward

REFLECTING BACK...
by Linda Watson, CANO Past President

On October 22, 2019, at the recent CANO/ACIO Annual General Meeting, I joined a very special group of national oncology nursing leaders in Canada; I became a past president of CANO. Being included in this group of accomplished leaders does not yet feel comfortable, but I am sure with time I will grow into it. Not long ago, my energies were focused on figuring out how to be the president, and that turned out pretty well, so I am confident I will adjust.

As I reflect back on the work our association accomplished in the last two years, I feel very proud. It would take too long to list all of the accomplishments, but here are some of the highlights. We revised the outdated survivorship modules and committed funds to ensure they will be available in both French and English. We developed and released a national Nursing Knowledge and Practice Framework that highlights nurses’ contribution to high-quality cancer care and addresses the variability of nursing roles and competencies across the spectrum of cancer care. We revised our annual conference structure to incorporate more hands-on, case-based learning opportunities and hosted two hugely successful conferences. We increased our investment in scholarships, travel grants and awards to more than $38,000 annually. We invested in leadership development by hosting leadership workshops at the last two conferences and more than 110 conference delegates participated. We have grown our membership annually and currently have the highest number of members in a decade. And finally, to ensure our chapters remain vibrant and relevant, significant work has been done to strengthen how CANO/ACIO supports chapters to host local educational events.

As I pass the presidency to Reanne, I feel confident that our organization is financially healthy and that CANO/ACIO will continue to invest in our members through increased funding directly to chapters, the development of new practice resources, and a continued commitment to ensuring our translation investments reflect the priorities of our members. CANO/ACIO is in good hands and has a very important role to play in ensuring cancer patients across Canada, regardless of their diagnosis, age, where they live or where they were born, receive high-quality care.

...AND PLANNING FORWARD
by Reanne Booker, CANO President

On the shoulders of giants and surrounded by some of the most brilliant and compassionate people I know, I am humbled and excited to take on the role of 17th president of the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology (CANO/ACIO). I am so grateful for the tremendous accomplishments achieved by Linda, outgoing Board members, and all who have served on the Board and who have contributed to advancing CANO/ACIO’s goals in the past. To borrow from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC) Canadian Strategy for Cancer Control (https://www.partnershipagainstcancer.ca/cancer-strategy/), we are “doing together what cannot be done alone.”

As I look ahead to the next two years, I am energized and optimistic. CANO/ACIO is recognized throughout the world as a leader in producing quality resources to help support practice, hosting high-quality educational events, providing numerous networking opportunities, publishing a world-class open access journal, and overall, fostering a sense of community for oncology nursing. Forthcoming initiatives will endeavour to improve patient and caregiver engagement, as well as offer more resources and supports for patients and caregivers. In addition, we recognize the need to provide more support to underserved populations, such as those residing in rural and remote regions within Canada. And, we are continuing to work on establishing connections within the international community in order to provide further supports where needed.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife and the associated Nursing Now campaign, promoted by the WHO and International Council of Nurses seeks to improve health by elevating the profile of nursing. It has been my experience that oncology nurses are among the most fervent advocates for quality patient care. CANO/ACIO now has more than 1,100 members; our members are front-line clinicians, students, educators, academics, researchers, administrators, and leaders. Let us use our collective voice and our shared desire to improve the lives of those affected by cancer to effect change.

In closing, I will leave you with these words, spoken by Barack Obama in 2008, “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” #NursingNow