



2019 Council Nominees

RPNAS is grateful to the candidates who have let their names stand for consideration for Council positions. Members will have received an email invitation to cast your vote. Please review the information below prior to voting.

President – Elect



Cheryl Carlson, RPN (Acclaimed)

Statement of Purpose

I have been an RPN for 35 years. I am concerned that the role of the RPN in Saskatchewan as well as across Canada is not fully understood and is underutilized. Given the complexity of mental health issues clients' experience, it is imperative that RPNs be educated and available to assist clients to manage their health challenges. With the increasing awareness of mental health issues, now is an opportune time to highlight the knowledge and expertise that RPNs possess and how we, as a profession, are poised to provide this specialized level of care. I am

prepared to work hard to have these issues addressed should I be elected to the position of president-elect representing RPNs on the RPNAS council. As an educator within the former RQHR, I recognize the value and importance of post-secondary education at the degree level, master's level and Nurse Practitioner and will advocate for this advancement. Another goal is to advocate for a comprehensive plan for changes to the RPNAS CPD credits. This will enhance and engage RPNs to further their professional development and specialized skills. I am also very interested in further development of RPNAS interpretive documents and specialty practice documents which will help identify the RPNAS specialty and our skills. Lastly, I will work towards being a change agent in promoting transparency, collaboration and building relationships with council members, RPNAS membership and our stake holders.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

- RPN Graduate - SIAST 1984
- BScN University of Saskatchewan 2011
- Gerontological nursing certificate 2005

Work experience

Long term care - 26 years as a general duty nurse and Resident Care Coordinator, Clinical Nurse Educator - 6 ½ years. Currently Program Development Educator (PDE) for Geriatric Services. Skills in coordination

and delivery of the P.I.E.C.E.S. education program. Responsible for coordinating education days, assessing education and practice needs in long term care facilities with residents with complex physical/cognitive mental health needs and behavioral changes. Deliver and promote evidenced based nursing skills, interventions and professional nursing practice especially in the area of neurological disorders.

I am very passionate and a strong advocate for mental health across the age continuum especially with the very vulnerable geriatric population. I feel RPNs are not recognized for our specialty in the assessment of neurocognitive disorders and best practice interventions/interactions. RPNs are also under-utilized and not encouraged to work to their full scope of practice in long term care.

Leadership Experience

- Member-at-large on the RPNAS council twice most recently from 2017-2019. Served in various positions (secretary, SDC, vice president) as a SUN representative at the local level.
- Volunteered with the Saskatchewan Alzheimer's Society as facilitator for their learning series which is presented to the public.

Nominees: Members-at-Large



Stephanie Bajus, RPN

Statement of Purpose

As a member of Council, I would support the RPNAS leadership to continue to develop, govern, and support RPNs within the province. Having worked within a variety of clinical roles I have developed skills in advocating for the role of the RPN and for the clients that we serve. I would like to continue to see increased education and public knowledge regarding the scope and benefits of RPNs practicing in a variety of areas.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

- Bachelor of Science in Psychiatric Nursing - Brandon University 2012
- Currently working towards a Master's Degree in Psychiatric Nursing, Brandon University.
- Began working as a RPN in Saskatchewan in May 2012 and have worked in both inpatient and community mental health settings

Leadership Experience

Although my formal leadership involvement is minimal, in my current role as a RPN and as a previous figure skating coach, I was able to develop and work on a variety of leadership skills. A component in the Brandon Master's Degree program is also leadership in healthcare which has taught me how to begin to develop solutions for problems, communication, advocating, delegating, trustworthiness, responsibility, and working with others in a variety of capacities.



Penni-Sue Caron, RPN

Statement of Purpose

Greetings, fellow RPNs. I am excited to seek nomination for member-at-large. I have been a RPNAS council member in the past as well as a member of our discipline committee. I left council several years ago with a sense that my tendency to be transparent and to seek innovation and continuous improvement was not in alignment with the goals of the organization at that time. I am now very encouraged with the work of the current council and the Executive Director's leadership and I am confident that I can contribute to the positive changes being

made to our "brand" and identity as psychiatric nurses.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

RPN Graduate - SIAST Wascana Campus 1991

Began my career at the Luther Care Home in Saskatoon. My career path has included long term care staff nursing in Saskatoon and Lanigan, community mental health nursing in rural Saskatoon Health District and Management of long term care, primary health care and mental health and addiction services. I have just left the role of Director, Mental Health and Addictions Services in Swift Current to return to long term care as the Director, Clinical Integration and Continuing Care-North, based in North Battleford. This is one of the four new positions within the Saskatchewan Health Authority, which will focus on best practice and positive change for continuing care across the province, and I am excited to be part of it.

Leadership Experience

- RPNAS council as member-at-large early 2000s
- RPNAS Discipline committee late 1990s
- Provincial Library Board member, representing Humboldt Branch 2008-2010
- Served as the Administrator for two care homes, reporting to a Board of Directors and helping the Board to understand their governance roles.
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Don Froese, RPN

Statement of Purpose

I have always had a firm belief that psychiatric nursing is a distinct profession and that psychiatric nurses bring a unique, evidence-informed approach to mental health care. Having taught mental health nursing theory and supervised nursing students in a generalist nursing degree program for 20 years, I believe that I would bring a unique understanding of the difference between mental health taught within a generalist program and within psychiatric nursing program that raises mental health issues as a priority in every course and clinical placement. As psychiatric nurses we need to be proud of the unique knowledge that we bring to the care that we provide. I have past experience on council and have a good understanding of the governance model and of council policies and procedures. I would be interested in working with the legislation committee.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

- Bachelor of Theology
- Bachelor of Arts
- Diploma in Psychiatric Nursing
- Certificate in Education
- 6 years working in a medical unit of Saskatoon Correctional Centre
- 20 years teaching degree nursing at Saskatchewan Polytechnic
- Casual nurse at Royal University Hospital acute psychiatry
- Casual nurse at Sherbrooke Community Centre Long Term Care

Leadership Experience

- 12 years – member-at-large, RPNAS Council
- 1 year – member-at-large, CMHA Saskatoon Branch



Michelle Manson, RPN

Statement of Purpose

My objective is to educate and provide public understanding of the RPN role and to promote the specialized profession of the Psychiatric Nurse. With the growing public awareness of mental health and addictions, RPNs have a vital role in healthcare in the province of Saskatchewan. I want to increase membership through the visibility of the Psychiatric Nursing profession and through the encouragement of psychiatric student nurse involvement. I would promote assistance to our existing membership to focus of the importance of professional development by increasing accessibility to professional development

opportunities to enhance RPN knowledge and skills. As an educator and working towards my degree in psychiatric nursing I would emphasize the importance of post-secondary education and promote the Bachelor Degree program in psychiatric nursing as an opportunity to advance competencies and employment opportunities within the profession.

With the mental health awareness and challenges increasing in our province I feel it is imperative to continue building the RPNAS membership to represent, support and encourage our current members to be involved in the psychiatric nursing profession.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

Graduated from the Psychiatric Nursing Program in 1993 and I am in the process of working towards my Psychiatric Nursing Degree. I have worked in several areas of mental health including adult, adolescent and pediatric psychiatry, corrections, addictions, and long term care. Other education includes Emergency Medical Certificate and Early Childhood Education Certificate. I am trained as a GPA – Gentle Persuasive Coach, P.I.E.C.E.S Facilitator, Mental Health First Aide Certification, TLR Trainer, and PPE/FIT Tester.

The majority of my career has been working as a RPN and educator in long term care. I worked several years as a Consultant and Clinical Nurse Educator with the health region. My current role is the Education Service Manager at a long term care facility in Regina. My role consists of providing education services to staff members, ensuring nurses are following facility and region policy to provide safe, competent, ethical nursing practice. Ensuring staff have completed all mandatory education requirements and providing support and assistance to staff in attaining professional development opportunities.

Leadership Experience

My leadership experience includes involvement as an active member in my community. I have participated as a volunteer for numerous activities and been a part of many communities over the course of 20 years. These activities have included managing dance and sports teams, fundraising, competition, recital, sports, and school communities.



Kyla Shabatura, RPN

Statement of Purpose

I am a strong advocate within our profession, my work organization, and the community for the role that psychiatric nurses play in providing a high quality of services to our patients. Our patients are a vulnerable population who are often marginalized and subject to high levels of stigma and discrimination. They often have no one to be a voice for them as they struggle to deal with their illness and live as a productive member of society. I believe the RPN has proven strengths and abilities that make them an integral part of the multidisciplinary team. They have historically been at the core of provincial mental health services, but in the last couple of years our profession has struggled with adversity in the workplace. We need to be stronger than ever to advocate for ourselves as health care providers, the patients, their families, and the community. I have been proud to participate in commercials with SUN to help enhance the public's knowledge of the importance of RPNs in the treatment of mental health and addiction services. I believe strongly that our responsibility is to be leaders in advocating for the needs of our patients. Positive mental health results in better health status, higher educational achievement, enhanced productivity and earnings, and improved quality of life. As graduates of nursing schools, we should be the champions of pushing for more seats within the Saskatchewan psychiatric nursing program to educate more psychiatric nurses within our province and push for even higher education, i.e. RPN NPs. I am a firm believer in building and enhancing the current scope of RPNs in our province. Having the opportunity to be on council will provide me a venue and afford me an opportunity to continue to be a leader and be an active stakeholder in future development and change management of our profession.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

I have obtained my 4 year degree in Psychiatric Nursing from Brandon University in 2006. I have been employed in a wide variety of settings – from an inpatient forensics unit, to community mental health nurse, and acute psychiatric inpatient unit. For the last year I have been the Clinical Care Coordinator of our 15 bed mental health inpatient ward which has allowed me to gain knowledge and experience through a different lens. I have gained a wealth of understanding about the needs of patients and where I believe the gaps in service exist. This knowledge can go far to be part of providing better patient centered care to our patients.

Leadership Experience

As an RPN, I feel it is very important to be active within our organization as well as in the community. My leadership experiences includes:

- On planning committees within our mental health center that focus on policy development
- Was part of the team that developed centralized intake for mental health and addictions in Yorkton, eliminating a wait list. The development of this team was provincially recognized at Health Quality Council.
- A member of the provincial working group for security and safety on inpatient mental health wards
- Current SUN local #266 vice president
- Current Nursing Advisory Committee (NAC) representative for my local



Jill Thompson, RPN

Statement of Purpose

Greetings to everyone. I am honored and excited to be nominated for member-at-large on the RPNAS council. My primary objective is to be the voice of other RPNs. While not every RPN is able to bring forth their opinions, concerns or experiences their voice is nonetheless essential. I vow to make myself available to all members by phone, e-mail, or in person when possible, so I can be your voice at council. I previously served a 2-year term as vice president for my daughter's elementary school council and through that role I recognized the power of the

people. It is so important for council members to share accurate and timely information to others. Grassroots workers need to be heard and given a platform for which to bring their opinions, concerns and experiences forward. If given an opportunity I will use my time on council to collaborate with others and work on your behalf. Thank you in advance for providing me an opportunity to be a council member-at-large. I know I can and will make a difference.

Education Preparation & Career Experience

I graduated from the diploma psychiatric nursing program at SIAST in 1993 upon where I gained employment at Wascana Rehabilitation Centre and eventually in We Care Home Care. Throughout my 25-year nursing career I have gained a wealth of experience in rehabilitation, home care, pediatrics, critical care, forensics, and education and now I am delving into research. I frequently enrolled back into post-secondary education while working and raising my daughter. I completed a nursing diploma program in 1995. I was offered, and successfully completed, a critical care nursing course through RQHR in 2000. While working full time in critical care as well as several other casual positions I was able to successfully complete a BScN degree from the U of S in 2007, a Masters of Adult Education degree from the U of R in 2012, and I am currently enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Athabasca with an anticipated graduation date of 2020. I have worked full time, teaching at Saskatchewan Polytechnic since 2008 and now hold a half time faculty position and a half time curriculum coordinator position. Aside from education, which has always been a passion of mine, I enjoy advocating for positive change. I have worked in London, England and Dartford Kent in the UK, as well as both Florida and California in the US.

Leadership Experience

- 2010-2011 – Vice President St. Piux X Catholic School Community Council – Volunteer. My involvement with the community council was a great experience. It provided me an opportunity to look at funding issues and opportunities.
- 2014 – Volunteer as a camp nurse for youth at Kedleston Gospel Camp.