

Reflections from the outgoing and incoming presidents

By the time you are reading this, the annual meeting and conference in Charlotte will be over and the ISPN Board will have undergone its annual restructure with Vicki Hines-Martin moving from President-Elect to President and our new President-elect, Treasurer and Board members taking their places.

I was attracted to ISPN because it seemed such a friendly and supportive organization. No more so has that been evident than in my time as ISPN President (and before that my time as President-Elect). There have been one or two challenges over the last year which I could not have dealt with without the unremitting support of my ISPN Board colleagues, Rene, Trez, Vicki, Ukamake and Julie. I thank each and every one of them because, like me, they have full-time lives yet still find time each month for ISPN's work. Indeed, commitment is such that one Board member even managed to join the monthly Board call while on a flight! I also want to mention ISPN's committees. ISPN committee work sometimes goes unheeded because much of their work is in the background, underpinning the work of the Board. To our ISPN committee volunteers, your important work is recognized and I want thank you all for your time and commitment to ISPN.

The biggest challenge in my time as President was lower than expected numbers at the Tempe conference in 2018 which consequently hit our budget predictions. Trez, our outgoing Treasurer, has done a sterling job of focusing the Board's collective mind and one positive outcome of this is that the Board has sharpened its strategic focus. The Board has set three broad strategic aims for ISPN: (1) increase the membership by maintaining existing members and recruiting new members; (2) increase the profitability of the annual conference; and (3) increase income from other sources. We discuss progress against each of these aims at every monthly Board meeting and there is active work going on in each of these three areas, e.g. work around recruiting student members with a view to converting them to full members, work on future conference formats, work on enhancing the CEU offer to members and work on identifying additional sponsors.

None of this could happen with the support of the Rees Group. As most of you know Kathy Kuehn retired last year. Kathy and Rene (the outgoing President when I took over) were incredibly supportive in helping me transition into the role of President. I remain as a Board member for a year as Past-President and both Jezz Retzlaff, our new Executive Director, and I, as outgoing President, offer our support to Vicki as she transitions in the role of President. Welcome Vicki and good luck in your tenure as President!

Steven Prymachuk, PhD PGDipEd RN (Mental Health) CPsychol SFHEA

ISPN Immediate Past-President

Throughout my term as President-Elect, I have grown in my appreciation for the work involved to keep the wheels of the organization turning, to address the needs of our members and to tackle the known and unknown challenges of the future. I have also joined Steven in a deepened respect for the nurses and non-nurses who have chosen to support ISPN and worked diligently because of their passion for organization. This passion cannot be overstated.

Even as I feel this support and passion, I also feel the gravity of my responsibility in leading ISPN through this next year. As President-Elect, I have become familiar with the organization in a way that is different from that of ISPN member, committee chair, board liaison, conference attendee or presenter – all of which I have had the privilege of being at one time or another. This new role as ISPN President provides a space in which I have great opportunities and challenges, to hear the *power of members' words* and perspectives, and to collaborate with others to successfully move our organization forward. I am lucky in that the board has been intentional this past year in identifying three broad strategic aims for ISPN: (1) increase the membership by maintaining existing members and recruiting new members; (2) increase the profitability of the annual conference; and (3) increase income from other sources. My challenge in collaboration with the ISPN board is to assure that each decision that is made and each initiative that is undertaken during this next year is measured according to how it moves the organization toward accomplishing one or more of those strategic aims.

Accomplishing these aims will require change - raising our profile in the area of *member benefits*, and identifying and raising awareness of *our assets* as an organization with unique opportunities for collaboration with advanced practice PMH nurses, authors, educators, policy makers, and researchers - from novice to expert. Many of us are expert mentors who wish to share our expertise to *support Advanced Practice PMH students* on their journey, whatever path it may take. *In every way we want others to know who we are* and my job is to work with like-minded others inside and outside the organization to get that done. Lastly and most importantly, we are a distinctive niche organization that must stay viable and continue to grow financially. I believe that as we accomplish the changes that are identified, we also enhance our ability to grow financially through collaborations, partnerships and innovation, and to reach a higher level of sustainability. ISPN is a jewel; my role, and commitment, will be to help it continue to shine brightly.

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ISPN President



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