

# Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science News

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As I write this, my final column as Chair of the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science (Council), it is the autumnal equinox and daylight and darkness are nearly equal around the world. Those of us in the Northern Hemisphere are preparing for the short days of winter, and like wildlife preparing to hibernate, we can feel less energetic in the fall and winter. At the Council, we are unaffected by the shorter days as we feverishly prepare for our Special Methods Conference on “The Expanding Science of Sensory Technology in Research.” The conference is scheduled for October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC. We are excited at the prospect of hearing from our outstanding speakers and viewing the posters submitted by our members.

As I near the end of my term, I have been reflecting on my goals, accomplishments, and my metaphorical voice. Please indulge me as I discuss all three. My goals for the Council were selected from our strategic plan and included: 1) serving as a vehicle to engage members; 2) clearly communicating our unique value to nursing science; and 3) improving inter/intra-organizational effectiveness and transparency to advance the visibility of the Council. I am happy to note that with the help of our excellent leadership team and members we have achieved each of these goals to a good degree.

We engaged new members through our 2017 Special Methods Conference on Pragmatic Trials, our 2018 State of the Science Conference on Precision Health, and our special interest groups. This year, we launched a special interest group for mid-career scholars that fills an important need nationally. For the second year, there will be a Duck-Hee Kang Memorial Mentored Workshop at the Special Methods Conference on sensor technology. The purpose of the Duck-Hee Kang Workshop is to provide an opportunity for competitively-selected, PhD prepared, early career nurse scientists to receive feedback on a grant proposal from senior research scientists and gain experience in completing a grant review.

We have also communicated our value through the very talented Science Committee who published two papers in the past two years. The topic of the first was on engaging members and partner organizations in translating a nursing science agenda (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27502762>).

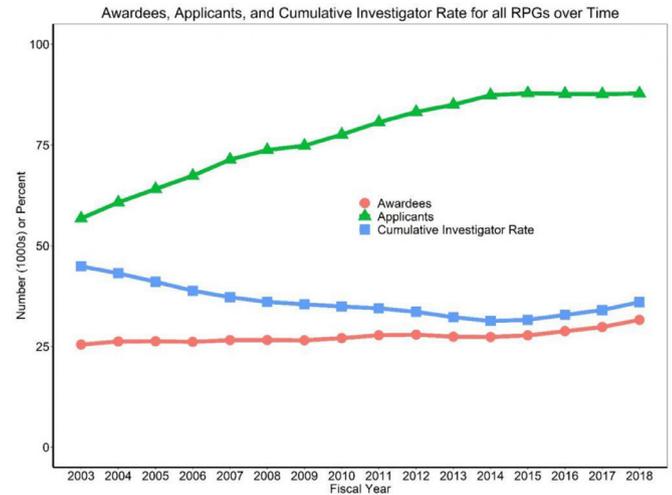
The paper proposed recommendations for translating research priorities into an action plan. The topics of funding, education, and training of future scientists were examined. The second paper, creating a shared vision for national nursing science priorities, (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28711216>) was meant to serve as a blueprint to inform a shared vision for future collaborations, areas of scientific inquiry, and resource allocation. In this paper, the Science Committee used Delphi methods to identify contemporary nursing science priorities. Priorities were categorized into four themes including: 1) precision science; 2) big data and data analytics; 3) determinants of health; and 4) global health; concluding that nurse scientists can generate new knowledge in priority areas that advances the health of the world’s populations. The Committee is nearly ready to submit another paper that builds on the priorities paper and applies the four themes in order to recommend approaches to nursing research on opioid use disorder. These publications have increased our visibility and impact on nursing science and generated discussions that are critical to the advancement of nursing science. The Science Committee presented a well-received symposium on use of technology in precision health research at the Council’s 2018 State of the Science Conference and will present another symposium to launch the 2019 Advanced Methods Conference.

We are pleased to be forging closer relationships with the American Academy of Nursing (Academy) Board and staff on financial planning, fundraising, promotions, and collaborations. We see a natural linkage between our focus on nursing science and the Academy’s emphasis on health policy and look forward to facilitating these linkages, including participation in the Annual Policy Conference.

Finally, I have been pondering my own contributions to nursing science and my “voice” for the profession. I remember how strong my voice was in my youth; how I was not afraid to share my thoughts and opinions, even though I had no experience or expertise! It took many years of education and practice to be socialized to be quiet. To be seen and not heard. To go along to get along. To conform to society’s expectations for

women and nurses. Part of my silencing was maturity. Part was recognition that softer voices often commanded more attention. But I am now cognizant of the multiple threats to nursing science, both within and outside of the profession. Right now, we need everyone's voice to insure the future of nursing and nursing research. After volunteering with the Council for the past 6 years, I feel privileged to have worked with the Leadership to raise the visibility and influence of the Council and serve our members. It has been a pleasure to work closely with Dr. Nancy Redeker, the incoming Chair and I am confident that the Council will grow and expand under her able leadership. I am going to miss working regularly with the Council Manager, Rachael James, who is an outstanding administrator and just happens to be a nurse as well. At the same time, I am mindful of the PhD pipeline and the future of nursing science. Some of the challenges to nursing science in the very near future include:

1. Small PhD programs with limited resources, including a shortage of qualified research mentors for students and trainees.
2. Retirements of senior nurse scientists and the need to assure a pipeline of early and mid-career scientists to replace them.
3. Lack of sufficient funding for research and a concomitant rise in the number of applications as noted in the figure from NIH<sup>1</sup>. Historically, it has been a struggle for nurse scientists to compete for funding with other health professionals, particularly physicians, because other professions often have more resources and lower teaching/service demands.
4. Need for interdisciplinary research. The AACN Position Statement on Nursing Research states,<sup>2</sup> "Today's complex health problems are not amenable to single-discipline research approaches. While nursing, social science, and biomedical research approaches make unique and independent contributions to the public's health, they also complement each other and bring balance to the nation's health and research agenda." Nurse scientists are uniquely qualified to lead interdisciplinary studies because a holistic approach to care is the



foundation of nursing practice and research. The increase in the number of multiple principal investigator applications however, means that indirect costs must be shared with other units, reducing support for many schools of nursing.

In conclusion, I encourage my fellow nurse scientists to raise their voices and strategically say no to time wasting activities, say yes to scholarly activities, to collaborate and support one another, and to value our science and the resulting evidence. It has been my privilege to serve as the Council Chair for the past 2 years and I look forward to building collaborations born of this role.

#### REFERENCES

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