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Cover: IEN Zeinab Zareiesfandabadi, IEN, IEN Khusbu Patel and EN Evona Dindyal, IEN Amos Omwono; Pg. 2: IEN Christine Salvio; IEN Monika Jassal and EN Syeda; Pg. 3 Ruth Lee, Leigh Chapman, Nasreen Alostaz; Case Managers Bessie Nasiopoulos and Abigail Lima; Pg. 4 Dr. Ruth Lee; Pg. 5 Phil Shalm; Pg. 6 Abigail Lima Luciana Lima, Maria Ejikeme, Mark Pearcey, Pg. 7 EN Leila Leech, IENs Maria Katrina Pantig and Mae Patoc and Case Manager Lourdes Vicente; IEN Rose Mutu and Case Manager Tina Novotny; Professional Practice Lead Ruth Wojtiuk and IEN Nicole O'Connor; Pg. 8 IENs Patumrat Playok, Onyinye Umenweke and Fairouz Naimy; Pg. 9; Pg. 11 An RNCCAP Preparation Class; Instructor Loy Asheri, RN and IV Therapy Workshop Class; Pg. 12 IEN Deborah Yan and EN Kaulay Bermudo; Middle photo: EN Omar Taladua with IEN Sumin Cho, VM Zoom photo: EN Ellie Kulbaba and IENs Gopiben Patel, Lina Wang and Samara Oliveira Pg. 13 PASS team members Bradley Desir, Meghan Wankel, Lily Liang, Integration Program Officer, Settlement Network, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Ruth Lee and Rola El Moubadder, IENs Alexis Mahan and Nelly Khalil; Bradley Desir, Rola El Moubadder and Nicholas Ghadiri; Pg. 14 IENs Jemima Adusei-Nsowah, Richard Asare, Daphne Joy Mendoza; Pg. 15 Maria Ejikeme, Bradley Desir and Holly Best Pg. 16 Ismail Assaad, Bessie Nasiopoulos, Lourdes Vicente, Ruth Lee, Abigail Lim, Meghan Wankel, Rola El Moubadder, Tina Novotny; Pg. 17 Jennifer Lopez, Philippine Consul General Angelica Escalona, Edward Cruz, Mark Gravoso, Rodolfo Lastimoso; Pg. 18 IENs Dawa Tshering, Ezinne Ebini and Beant Kaur; Pg. 19 Professional Practice Lead Ruth Wojtiuk, Membership Liaison Assistant Kesang Yuden, WIP session at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre; Pg. 20 middle photo, Lisa Miller, Michael Dana Quilana and Ulises Pantaleon and NYGH Colleagues; Rola El Moubadder, Ruth Lee, Gilda Gomez, Amy Son, Elaine Santa Mina and Tina Novotny; Pg. 21 Lourdes Vicente and Meghan Wankel; IEN Kristine Alonzo; Back Cover: CARE Centre staff; Bessie Nasiopoulos, Luciana Lima and Rola El Moubadder

[www.care4nurses.org](http://www.care4nurses.org)



## Our Vision:

Internationally educated nurses are leaders in the profession and integral to the effectiveness of Canada's healthcare system.

## Our Mission:

To strengthen Canada's healthcare system by leading in the development and integration of a culturally diverse, inclusive, and effective healthcare workforce in which internationally educated nurses contribute their expertise and fulfil their leadership potential.

## Core Purpose Statement:

### We are committed to:

- Being a leading voice for internationally educated nurses in Canada.
- Maximizing and promoting the internationally educated nurse's essential role within the Canadian healthcare system.
- Contributing to effective long-term solutions for the healthcare workforce through the sharing of our knowledge and expertise; and
- Creating professional pathways to enable the full and effective integration of internationally educated nurses, today and tomorrow.

## Our Motto:

IENs' success is our success.

## Our Values Statement:

As we look to the future, we remain committed to our values and to actively living by example. Our values guide us daily and are at the core of our organizational culture.

### We believe in being:

**Respectful**, with each other, and with our clients, partners, and supporters.

**Collaborative**, by listening, learning, and working together as a team to fulfill our goals.

**Compassionate**, by showing understanding for the lives of those we serve.

**Accountable**, as a staff and board to our clients, our funders, and our purpose.

**Professional**, in all aspects of our work, demonstrating high standards of ethics and integrity.

**Inclusive**, by championing equity, diversity, and access as a culturally competent organization, serving as a role model and advocating for change.





## Dr. Ruth Lee - Executive Director Executive Director's Letter

When I reflect on the last year of operations, I am once again so grateful for our circle of Internationally Educated Nurse (IEN) supporters, starting with our staff members, who always go above and beyond in their service to our clients. I am also deeply appreciative of our Board of Directors and Chair Phil Schalm, who give of their time and expertise to guide CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses (CARE Centre) through times both challenging and celebratory. CARE Centre could not achieve what we do without our wider network of IEN educators, regulators, employers, and other stakeholder organizations. Our heartfelt gratitude to the words of recognition and encouragements from Dr. Leigh Chapman, Chief Nursing Officer of Canada and Dr. Karima Velji, Ontario's Chief of Nursing and Professional Practice at our virtual graduation ceremony. When we embarked on our new Strategic Plan 2023-2026, we updated our Mission, Vision, and Values statements, to mark our achievements and set our sights on the changes we want to foster in many aspects of the nursing environment affecting IEN success. We will achieve these goals through collaboration and shared objectives with all IEN supporters. Over the past year, CARE Centre was active on a wider stage than ever before. The International Congress of Nurses returned to Canada after 26 years, holding the event in Montreal from July 1-5. The Congress was hosted by the Canadian Nurses Association, under the theme: Nurses Together: A Force for Global Health. The event was attended by over 6,000 nurses from 126 countries, offering a tremendous audience for three CARE Centre led e-poster presentations with our partner organizations and my own oral presentation on *The Successful Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses in the Workforce: Strategies for Nursing Leaders*. CARE Centre thanks the National Nursing Assessment Service for sharing their booth space, which allowed us to meet a significant number of attendees from all

around the world. On a somber note, international trends in nurse immigration to Canada were increasingly compelled by war, conflict, and political persecution, with CARE Centre supporting the largest number of refugee nurses since our organization began in 2001. The surge in these clients has meant that we have had to adapt our services to accommodate language and technological barriers. We strengthened and established more partnerships with organizations in the settlement sector, including pre-arrival, to make sure IENs could choose CARE Centre's wraparound services. We also met with nurse education providers, to strategize on the best learning approaches to fast-track IENs to registration and employment. We thank the Government of Ontario for waiving some tuition fees and reimbursing registration costs for IENs. Our employer partners were also front and centre over the year's activities, hosting Meet the Employer webinars, and inviting our clients to apply for non-regulated positions while working through their registration process, to transition them more seamlessly to nursing employment post-registration. We also rolled out our unique employer support services, the Workplace Integration Program. We have renewed our approach to support IENs in new jobs beyond their initial orientation, to work with employers to provide a more solid and systematic integration, allowing for the full participation of IENs, able to contribute their skills, experience, and international insights into the Canadian healthcare system. As we say, IENs' success is CARE Centre's success, and a triple win for our clients, our organization and Canadian healthcare. We thank the Ontario Government and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada for their funding support which makes our work possible.





Mr. Phil Schalm - Chair

## Message from the Chair

CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses' (CARE Centre) Board of Directors approved a new Strategic Plan for the organization in July of 2023, setting organizational priorities through to the year 2026. The two core strategic directions are to effect system change by advancing solutions to the healthcare human resources crisis with systems-level interventions; and secondly, to enact program innovation by designing and delivering innovative, effective programs tailored to the needs of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) and employers. The Strategic Plan also has two main enabling strategies: to promote organizational resilience by ensuring sustainable and effective responses to change by exploring and implementing technology, human resources, and revenue solutions; and to raise brand presence by building awareness and increasing our reach provincially, nationally, and internationally through strategic marketing and communications. The pandemic accelerated CARE Centre's speed in achieving many of the goals of the previous Strategic Plan as we moved through virtual then blended program delivery. Post-pandemic, we are now faced with a healthcare human resource emergency, as the expected impact of a generation of nurses retiring is compounded by a mass exodus of nurses from the profession due to COVID-19 and related working conditions. Nurses make up almost half of all healthcare workers in Canada (48.2%). Presently, 8.9% of the nursing workforce is comprised of IENs. There can be many more IENs working, if the regulatory and employment landscape evolves to integrate them more efficiently. Certainly, many changes have happened over recent months, and the College of Nurses of Ontario, in its March Council meeting, are moving to amend the education requirement for General Class registration from Canadian equivalent to relevant nursing education recognized or approved in any jurisdiction. CARE Centre has spent 23 years advocating for improvements in

the registration, hiring and integration of IENs in this province. The organization is uniquely positioned to champion IENs in Ontario, through the dedicated direction of Dr. Ruth Lee and her equally devoted staff, some of whom have been with CARE Centre for more than a decade. Many are IENs who had lived through the process successfully. CARE Centre appreciates the additional funding from the Ontario government at the fiscal year end to pilot a Workplace Integration Program to support employers, to assist in their orientation, transition, and integration of IENs, who have different on-boarding needs than new Canadian graduates. The uptake of this program by employers certainly signals the importance of continued Government support for such programming. CARE Centre continues to work with a great number of formal employer partners who offer placements in its mentoring program, and a wider number of employers who also show renewed interest in hiring CARE Centre member IENs and supporting them in their career development. CARE Centre improved the registration journey for newcomer nurses when the Pre-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) program was established in 2016 (funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada), jumpstarting opportunities for IENs settling across the country. With decades of experience supporting IENs in this province (funded by the Government of Ontario), through the STARS program (Supports, Training, and Access to Regulated-employment Services) CARE Centre continues to break new ground on improving outcomes for IENs relaunching their nursing careers. On behalf of the Board of Directors, congratulations to Ruth and her team for another year of stellar organizational performance and creative leadership within the health sector.

## Staff & Office Changes

We were happy to bring a member IEN on board as a case manager, hiring Abigail Lima in June 2023 to serve clients in our Peel and Toronto offices. Abigail is a CARE member who participated in our IENCAP (RNCCAP) prep course and was successful in gaining her RN license. She is an IEN from the Philippines who has been working in healthcare since she arrived in Canada in 2012. Her experience in different healthcare settings for over ten years both internationally and in Canada includes home health nursing, urgent/walk in clinics and hospital settings. Abigail has always been passionate about advocating for the smooth integration of Internationally Educated Nurses (IEN) into the Canadian nursing workforce.

CARE Centre received a wonderful addition to the client services and administrative team when Maria Ejikeme joined us in August as our File Management Clerk, assisting Emmanuel Mmari and Kesang Yuden in the Toronto office. Maria has a background in Government and Public Administration. Holding a BSc in Government and Public Administration and an MPA from George Washington University, Maria has extensive experience in program management and administration. She has worked across various sectors in both Nigeria and the US, including significant roles in home health administration.

CARE Centre welcomed another of our member IENs as a STARS case manager when Luciana Lima joined us in November to cover Case Manager Ganiat Animashaun's maternity leave. We wish Ganiat all the best caring for her new son, who has two older brothers! Luciana is a past Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Award-winner who works in the emergency department at Mackenzie Health. Luciana is an IEN from Brazil and is very active in promoting CARE Centre and Canadian healthcare internationally. With over a decade of nursing experience, Luciana is certified in Lactation Support and is training to become a Lactation Consultant. She also coordinates the online lactation support group at Mamas Au Lait. Besides clinical work, Luciana has experience in nursing education and research.

PASS acquired a new team-member when Mark Piercey joined us as Marketing and Promotions Officer in March 2024. Mark is a long-standing friend of CARE Centre and comes to us from his position as a Marketing, Content and Engagement Specialist for PreArrivalCanada.ca, through the YMCA of the Greater Toronto Area. He performed a leadership role in creating the pre-arrival Client and Intake Referral Portal for the federal government. Mark has extensive experience in marketing, outreach, content engagement, graphic design, campaign preparation, social media takeover, group training and reputational/crisis management.

CARE Centre sees clients at the Newcomer Centre of Peel, in Mississauga bordering Brampton, since January 2024. In Hamilton, Lourdes Vicente, Case Manager and Mentorship Program Lead offers in-person service at College Boreal and sees clients in St. Catharines at our employer partner's premises, Pioneer Elder Care. In London, Case Manager Ismail El Assaad sees clients at the Access Centre and in Windsor at WEST. Our head office in Toronto is at Bloor and Sherbourne on the 19th floor of Postmedia Place. Please see the back page of the annual report for street addresses and contact information.

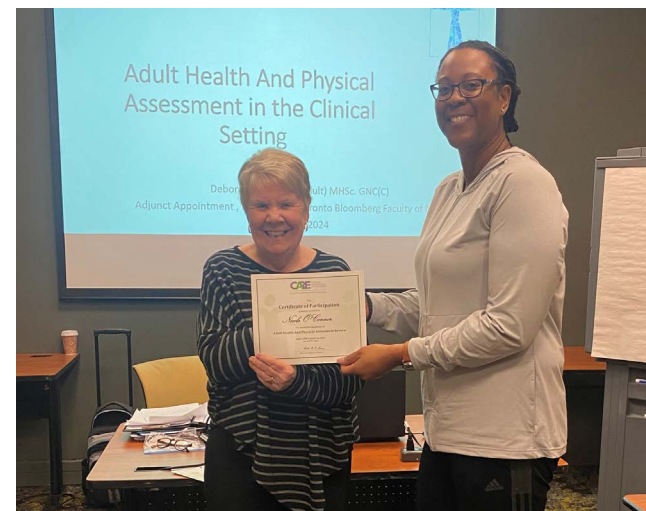


# STARS

## STARS Case Management

### Supports, Training, & Access to Regulated-employment Services

CARE Centre's Supports, Training, and Access to Regulated-employment Services (STARS) program for IENs living in Ontario, is centred around our case management model. This model has at its core our unique one-to-one relationship between member Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) and their case manager. IENs are assigned a case manager as soon as membership is confirmed. Several case managers are CARE Centre member IENs, while others are Canadian-educated nurses or have backgrounds in English-language acquisition and immigrant settlement support. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings between case managers and their clients typically take place over Zoom, but in-person meetings can always be scheduled at our locations across southern Ontario from Windsor to Kingston. CARE Centre also serves IENs in more remote locations across the province using video platforms. Additionally, case managers stay in constant contact with members through email updates and phone call check-ins. At the start of the intake process, case managers guide their clients through a Nursing Readiness Assessment (NRA), developed by CARE Centre to orient new members to nursing in Canada. The results help clients and case managers develop a customized service plan to highlight an IEN's strengths and to identify areas for improvement. This can include self-study, or academic upgrading. Once the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) moves forward with a client's application, they will identify any gaps in nursing knowledge to be addressed. The applicant will receive a list of educational requirements, which they can address through wider bridging programs or through specific course selections now offered by various colleges and universities. CARE Centre is recognized as a leader in nursing-specific language training and offers all new clients an iCELBAN Communications Skills Assessment, a requirement of STARS membership. The iCELBAN stands for the institutional Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses, which follows the approach of the official CELBAN testing model. If a member does not reach the CLB 7 ranking required for CARE Centre membership, we can offer access to language learning supports on our Canvas platform and a retake of the iCELBAN. We can also offer individualized study and practice supports divided into the four skills of language assessment: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Case managers use the iCELBAN results to enhance IENs' custom service plans to improve overall language proficiency. The iCELBAN is also a highly useful tool for IENs to refer to in preparing for nursing examinations, as communication is so integral to nursing in all areas of training, employment, and career success.







## STARS Signature Programming

Over its 23 years of service, CARE Centre has anticipated and responded to changes in the regulatory, educational and employment environment for IENs with a range of interventions. Specialized courses and workshops have been developed using the knowledge and experience of staff and Expert Nurses and other professionals from CARE Centre's community of supporters. Our signature programming includes online and in-person workshops and webinars on subjects for settlement support, such as accessing financial assistance and orientation to the nursing process in Canada. The Employment Strategies Workshop is very popular, with a client commenting, "The Employment Strategies was an excellent workshop to attend. I learned so much about resume writing and how to conduct myself in an interview. I will use these tips moving forward to seek employment in the workplace." There is a range of workshops on core clinical competencies such as Wound Care, Nursing Documentation, IV Therapy, ECG Placement and Assessment, Oncology Care, Infection Control, and other important topics. CARE Centre also offers workshops focused on nursing communication skills, such as effective email writing, and communication with the inter-professional team. Other "soft skill" but equally important areas include dealing with challenging patients and their family members or preparing for a successful clinical placement. A client commented "The instructor shared clips that related to workplace scenarios and the small group discussions were helpful to give others ideas on how to react and respond. I think these activities were good to increase the interaction in the online workshop." CARE Centre now offers training in Indigenous Health Care and has provided a workshop on Building Solidarity with Black Nurses to Overcome Systemic Racism. CARE Centre's cornerstone programming also includes exam preparation, such as for the Next Generation NCLEX RN exam, the Rex-PN RPN exam, and the RNCCAP, the Objective Structured Clinical Examination for IENs. CARE Centre also has regular Meet the Employer webinars and employer job fairs for direct recruitment, as well as regional information sessions to invite nurses who immigrated to the Greater Toronto Area to consider building their nursing careers in other parts of Ontario. Many employers offer financial incentives for relocation and service contracts. Other comments from workshop participants reflect the value members find in CARE Centre's professional development:

**"I would like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in organizing this workshop and for allowing us to participate." "CARE Center cares for Internationally Educated Nurses in various ways! Today's topic was so empowering." "The course information was well delivered and an eye opener. I learned a lot."**



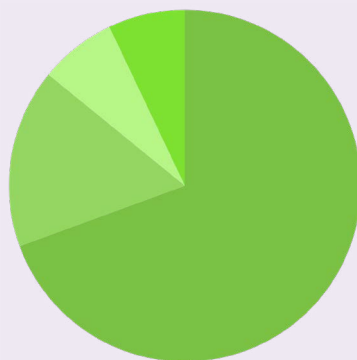
Learn More About the STARS Program





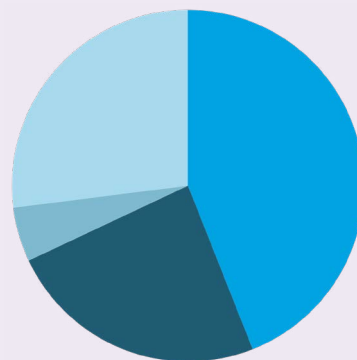
# Participant Profile

## Immigration Status



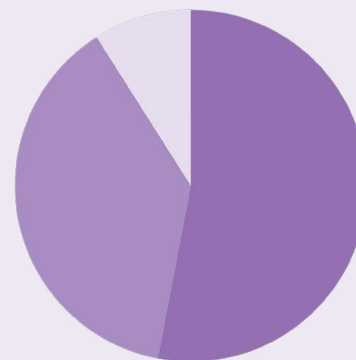
Permanent Resident: 59%  
Canadian Citizen: 14%  
Convention Refugee: 6%  
Refugee Claimant: 21%

## Immigration Class



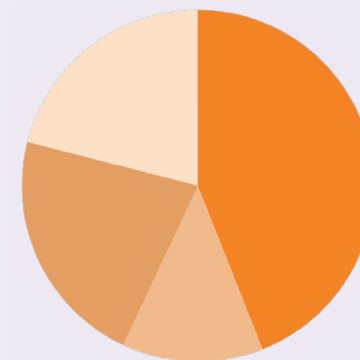
Independent/Professional Skilled: 44%  
Family Sponsored: 24%  
Other: 5%  
Convention Refugee: 27%

## Level of Education in Country of Origin



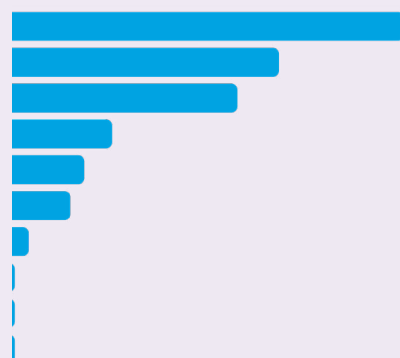
Bachelor Degree: 53%  
College Diploma: 38%  
Masters Degree: 9%  
PhD: 0%

## Length of Time in Canada



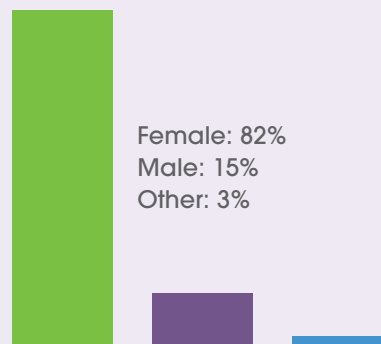
> 4 Years: 44%  
2 - 4 Years: 13%  
< 1 Year: 22%  
1 - 2 Years: 21%

## Country of Origin



Other: 30%  
India: 21%  
Philippines: 18%  
Kenya: 9%  
Nigeria: 7%  
Uganda: 6%  
Ghana: 3%  
Iran: 2%  
Brazil: 2%  
Hong Kong: 2%

## Gender



Female: 82%  
Male: 15%  
Other: 3%

## Nursing Experience in Country of Origin



None: 8%  
Under 5 Years: 34%  
6 - 10 Years: 34%  
11 - 20 Years: 24%

# Program Updates



## EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES:

**290**

One On One Employment Counselling Participants

**58 clients**

Received Mentoring, Including Virtual Mentoring, Observational Job Shadowing and Supervised Practice Experience Partnership



## SPECIALIZED WORKSHOPS & PDs:

**FREE**

**869 clients**

Attended **55** workshops

**PAID**

**211 clients**

Attended **18** workshops



## MEMBER STATS:

**479**

New Applications

**243**

New Members

**96**

Members passed CNO RN RexPN Exams

**194**

CNO, RN, RPN Registrations

**221**

CNO, RN, RPN Employment



## COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS ASSESSMENT:

**132**

**259 clients**

Communication and Workplace Culture Workshops/Webinars



## COURSE ATTENDANCE

**165 clients**

Career Development Webinars

**274 clients**

Employment Workshops and Webinars

**244 clients**

Nursing Skills Workshops

**138 clients**

Examination and Licensure Preparation Workshops

Learn More About CARE Centre Programs & Events





## Professional Development

CARE Centre's Professional Development (PD) courses and workshops are one of the greatest values to member IENs, whether they are beginning their journey to registration, or are licensed and employed and seeking career advancement. Our PD offerings fall into four main categories reflecting our organizational activities as supported by our funder, the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. These four areas are Communication and Workplace Integration, Nursing Knowledge and Skills, Licensure and Exam Preparation, and Employment and Career Development.

A highly popular workshop offered regularly in our schedule takes place on site at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre: Updating Your Health Assessment Skills. This workshop allows clients to understand and apply a systematic head to toe assessment for the acute care patient and to critically prioritize assessments and evaluations based on patients' changing conditions. The workshop lets Sunnybrook staff meet our member IENs for possible mentoring and recruitment. CARE Centre offers a variety of other clinical workshops such as Wound Care, Medication Safety, Electro-cardiogram, and IV Therapy.

CARE Centre prepares clients for different licensing exams, and times our Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) for IENs, the Registered Nurses Canadian Competency Assessment Program (RNCCAP), to run six weeks before the exam delivery by Touchstone Institute, usually four times a year. CARE Centre's RNCCAP prep course focuses on communication skills and interactions with simulated patients, colleagues, or patients' family members. Participants in the course have a 95% success rate in passing the exam. CARE Centre moved our Next Generation NCLEX preparation for the RN exam onto our Canvas Learning platform, giving members three weeks' access to materials free of charge with oversight by our Professional Practice Lead. Preparation for the RPN exam, the Rex-PN, is also offered when there is demand.

Another regular workshop, now expanded to a full day, is our Verbal Reporting sessions, offered quarterly. Health Teaching, and Conflict Management, Assertiveness and Advocacy are other Language and Communication for Nurses staples. Also regularly in the calendar is our three-day Employment Strategies Workshop, for resume and interview preparation, and mock interviews with representatives from our employer partners.

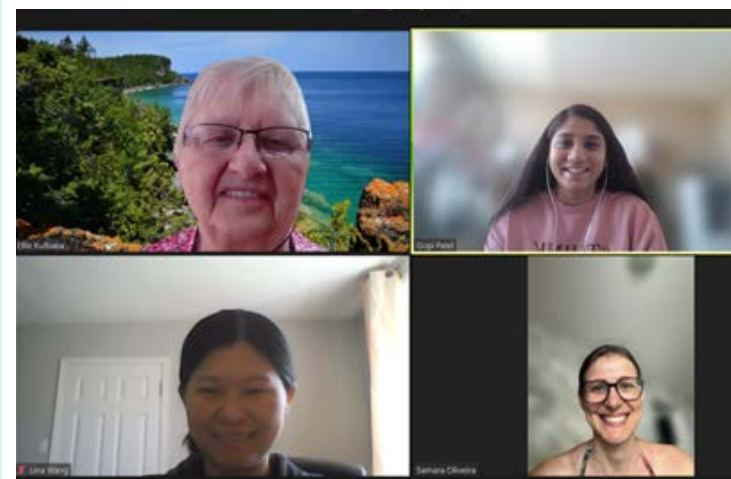
CARE Centre now offers monthly, blended information sessions, with IENs invited to visit our offices in person or to join on Zoom. Our September 2023 Information session boasted 515 participants. We also had a robust audience for our Nursing Week 2023 guest speaker, Order of Canada recipient Dr. Angela Cooper Brathwaite, with over 100 participants. Our virtual graduation ceremony in the fall of 2023 was equally well attended, with guests, Dr. Leigh Chapman, Chief Nursing Officer of Canada and Dr. Karima Velji, Ontario's Chief of Nursing and Professional Practice and Assistant Deputy Minister. The valedictorian was Rodolfo Lastimosa.

Our member IENs can also have their career prospects enhanced through our Meet the Employer sessions. There were 11 Meet the Employer sessions in the last fiscal year including longstanding employer partners who support our Mentoring Program, and employers newer to CARE Centre. Employers were from both the Acute Care and Long-Term Care settings. We have additional Community Care employer partners also offering recruitment opportunities more recently.



## Mentorship Program: Observational Job Shadowing and Virtual Mentoring

In post-pandemic 2023-2024 CARE Centre was able to offer in-person Observational Job Shadowing (OJS), while continuing with the Virtual Mentoring Program delivered during COVID-19. We are indebted to our incredible Expert Nurses who mentor our clients on shift in their workplaces or meet with one to three members on Zoom. CARE Centre now has 28 formal employer partner sites or organizations in acute, long-term and community care after welcoming University Health Network with its three hospital locations to the Observational Job Shadowing program, offering valuable Ontario workplace experience and exposure. These employers offer mentoring in the Greater Toronto Area, Peel Region, Hamilton, Niagara, London, and Kingston, several of them since the very beginning of the program. In 2023-2024, 71 IENs participated in CARE Centre's Mentorship Program, which includes OJS, Virtual Mentoring and the Supervised Practice Experience Program (SPEP), administered by the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) and Ontario Health. Both OJS and Virtual Mentoring are helpful foundations for IENs wanting to participate in SPEP and beneficial to IENs pursuing Temporary Licensing, another registration option. Of the total, 45 members completed mentorship assignments, while 13 were able to update their currency of practice and demonstrate language proficiency with SPEP. During an OJS placement a participant IEN will spend two or three shifts observing an Expert Nurse in a variety of practice settings: Emergency, Critical Care, Medical-Surgical, Child and Maternal Health, among others. For Virtual Mentoring, CARE Centre members meet with Expert Nurses in three to four online meetings a month in one or two-hour sessions, discussing areas of specialized practice. The SPEP program offers a minimum of 140 clinical hours to update currency of practice. SPEP is an opportunity for IENs to understand the role and scope of practice of a nurse in a particular healthcare setting to acquaint them with the language and culture of the Canadian workplace. Most IENs benefit from exploring job opportunities during their discussions with Expert Nurses. The main role of Expert Nurses working in these programs is to familiarize member IENs with the College of Nurses of Ontario's (CNO) professional practice guidelines and how to apply them in various healthcare settings. In either in-person or virtual interactions, the mentoring nurses discuss their nursing practice and provide guidance on gaining employment. They can encourage licensed and working IENs to develop specializations or to discover different practice settings.





## **PASS** Pre-Arrival Supports & Services

The Pre-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) program, funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), is a program of CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs). PASS connects with IENs in their countries of residence (whether in their home country or another jurisdiction) who have proof of graduation from a recognized nursing program and have been accepted by the Canadian government as Permanent Residents or Convention Refugees. There is no cost to enroll in PASS. During their emigration planning, PASS orients IENs to nursing in Canada, including registration steps they can take before arrival, and offers referral to settlement supports in every province and territory, including for language and employment. PASS prepares participants to be thoroughly informed about the realities of the nursing profession in Canada, coaching them to be well-oriented to gain nursing employment more quickly. From January 2016 to the end of the last fiscal year (March 31, 2024), PASS served over 1606 IENs from 90 Countries. In the last fiscal year, between April 2023 and March 2024, 180 IENs joined PASS and accessed online resources. The Philippines, India and Cameroon were the three top source countries, followed by Nigeria, Columbia, Ghana, Kenya and Jamaica. Virtual, individual case management continued to enhance the preparation experience for IENs ready for emigration and PASS increased the wide variety of webinars and information available to members pre-arrival, including live and recorded modules on the Canadian labour market, workplace culture, and employment law and standards. All webinars addressed diverse aspects of the Canadian healthcare system, including how IENs can identify transferable skills for temporary employment while pursuing licensure. Online courses providing nursing occupation- specific English language and communication training are highly recommended and popular resources.

**PASS offers mentoring opportunities with Expert Nurses across the country through the Canadian Nurses Association. PASS members have valuable career assets in their mentors, paired on a geographic or nursing specialization basis. More information is available on the website at [www.pass4nurses.org](http://www.pass4nurses.org).**

Learn More About PASS





The Pre-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) program is launching innovative outreach programs to expand its reach and support more clients. One exciting campaign, "PASS IT ON...", will empower Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) in Canada and abroad to refer the PASS program to fellow nurses approved to immigrate to Canada. This peer-to-peer referral initiative leverages the power of community and networking to connect more nurses with the resources they need.

Through "PASS IT ON...", IENs can quickly share information about the PASS pre-arrival program with colleagues, friends, and family members who are planning to immigrate and work in Canada. This campaign harnesses the influence of personal connections and word-of-mouth recommendations to increase awareness and access to the program. By tapping into existing networks, PASS aims to support more nurses in achieving their Canadian health-care career goals.

To make sharing easy and convenient, the "PASS IT ON..." campaign offers a range of digital platforms for referrals, including WhatsApp, Facebook, Email, and more. With just a few clicks, IENs and their supporters can pass on valuable information and resources, helping to ensure a smoother transition to Canada. By working together, we can build a stronger, more supportive global community for Internationally Educated Nurses.



[Learn More About PASS](#)



# CARE Centre Outreach Activities

Throughout the last year CARE Centre met with important stakeholder organizations in the nursing and settlement sectors, including government bodies, nursing regulators, educators, employers, professional associations, and other interest groups supporting IENs. CARE Centre is grateful for the on-going support from Chief Nursing Officer of Canada Dr. Leigh Chapman, Dr. Karima Velji, Chief Nursing Officer and Professional Practice and Assistant Deputy Minister of Ontario, and Ms. Liliانا Canadic, Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health, Government of Saskatchewan.

Throughout CARE Centre's professional activities during the continuing nursing shortage across the country, there was amplified recognition of IENs as a crucial health human resource. There is heightened collaboration among organizations to support IENs to registration and employment in an accelerated approach, through both our STARS and PASS networks.

CARE Centre met with a variety of nursing and healthcare sector organizations. We were invited to join the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing's newly established IEN Mentorship Advisory Committee to provide guidance in the development and implementation to their Health Canada funded IEN Mentorship Program. We had also met with the Canadian Nurses Foundation to explore financial supports for IENs through their scholarship program, and participated on the Canadian Nurses' Association's research project "Racism in Nursing" Advisory Committee. CARE Centre also met with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, exploring opportunities for IENs through their Opening Minds initiative.

On the technical frontier front, we established relationships with the Ontario Centres for Learning, Research, and Innovation at Baycrest to learn about and offer members access to their Learning Inter-Professionally Healthcare Accelerator (LIPHA) program, which offers long-term care nursing education through a gaming platform, and with the University of Ottawa's Telfer School of Management, to explore piloting an AI platform to review nursing resumes for our clients, freeing up some time for case managers to focus on other activities.

Our well-established relationships with healthcare employers are crucial to the success of our member IENs, and we continued to collaborate closely. CARE Centre worked with Michael Garron Hospital, North York General Hospital, Scarborough Health Network, and Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre to discuss how CARE Centre can support their Critical Care Nursing Partnership by creating a pool of Intensive Care/Critical Care Nurses. We also worked with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) for recruiting and mentoring opportunities, among many other employers who presented informational webinars to member IENs and actively recruited. We are grateful to the many employers who offer the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership (SPEP), administered by the CNO and Ontario Health, to allow our members to regain currency of practice, as well as Temporary License opportunities.

CARE Centre continues to partner with many organizations in the immigration and settlement sector. We collaborate with umbrella groups such as OCASI (Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants) and CASSA (Council of Agencies Serving South Asians) as well as the four Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs). We were pleased to continue our collaborative relationship with Kababayan Community Services, one of CARE Centre's founding organizations, under the new Executive Director Ms. Rizza Solis' leadership, after the retirement of Executive Director Flor Dandal, one of CARE Centre's and IENs' greatest champions.



# CARE Centre at Conferences

CARE Centre staff were excited to attend more in-person conferences and meetings as the COVID-19 pandemic no longer impacted large gatherings. Over the last year, CARE Centre staff have been pleased to present our research and data on our programs at a number of conferences, including those held virtually to national or international audiences.

## Partners in Education for Internationally Educated Nurses (PIE-IEN), Calgary

May 1 – 2, 2023 Two joint presentations were delivered with Meghan Wankel, Rola El Moubadder, Ruth Lee, Lourdes Vicente and Joy Navaroj, RN, Clinical Educator-Extern Program and Nursing Workforce Development, Trillium Health Partners entitled *Supporting Internationally Educated Nurses Pre- to Post-Arrival Through Mentorship Models*: CARE Centre for IENs and Meghan Wankel, Ruth L., Liliana Canadic, Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health, Government of Saskatchewan and Heather Jussup, Health Authority of Nova Scotia presented *Provincial Initiatives to Engage, Support and Integrate Internationally Educated Nurses into the Canadian Healthcare System*.

## Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO), Toronto

June 22- 25, 2023 Ruth Lee, Rola El Moubadder and Tina Novotny attended RNAO's first in person Annual General Meeting post-pandemic. CARE Centre's information booth attracted many attendees who were interested in becoming involved in our mentorship program.

## The International Congress of Nurses 29th Congress, Montreal

July 1-5, 2023 When it came to conference presentations and attendance, the highlight of the 2023-2024 operating year was the International Congress of Nurses 29th Congress in Montreal. From July 1st to 5th, the delegation of CARE Centre staff presented three posters and networked with nursing colleagues from around the globe. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau spoke at the closing of the conference, highlighting the vital role of nurses across societies and how countries sharing knowledge without borders will enrich the future of nursing. Dr. Ruth Lee had an

enthusiastic, standing room only audience for her presentation *Successful Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses into the Workforce: Strategies for Nursing Leaders*.

The three e-poster presentations were as follows: *Internationally Educated Nurses Successfully Transition into Practice Amidst The COVID Pandemic*: Ruth Wojtiuk; Ruth Lee; Dr. Joy Richards, Vice President Health Education Development & Executive in Residence, Michener Institute, University Health Network; Brenda L. Perkins-Meingast, Director, Practice Based Education & Synapse Clinical Lead – Nursing & Collaborative Academic Practice University Health Network; *CARE Centre Nurse Mentorship Models: Pre-to Post-Arrival*: Ruth Lee, Rola El Moubadder El Moubadder; Meghan Wankel; Lourdes Vicente; Joy Navaroj, Clinical Educator- Extern Program and Nursing Workforce Development, Trillium Health Partners; *Strengthening Canada's Diverse Health Human Resources Initiatives*: Ruth Lee; Liliana Canadic, Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health, Government of Saskatchewan; Omar Tag El-Din, Immigration & International Recruitment Consultant, Health Association Nova Scotia; Meghan Wankel



# CARE Centre at Conferences

## Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO)

September 21, 2023 Rola El Moubadder and Ruth Lee presented at the Best Practice Spotlight Organization Knowledge Exchange Symposium in Toronto with Desa Dlugosz, ARN, Med, Interim Manager Professional Practice, Trillium Health Partners Joy Navaroj, RN, BScN, Professional Practice Clinical Educator, Trillium Health Partners on *The Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses in the Workplace: An Organizational Success Story*.

## Planning for Canada, Saskatoon

September 25 - 26, 2023 Meghan Wankel attended Planning for Canada Partners meeting in Saskatoon. She provided updates on the PASS program and participated as a mentor in an event at the Saskatoon Open Door Society.

## Building Communities through Inclusive Health Conference, Toronto

October 13, 2023 Rola El Moubadder attended this Conference at University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, hosted by Scarborough Health Network and the University of Toronto.

## Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI), Toronto

October 26 - 27, 2023 Gilda Gomez and Holly Best hosted an exhibition table at OCASI's 45th Annual General Meeting and Professional Development Conference. Five staff members attended.

## Internationally Educated Professionals (IEP) Conference, Toronto

October 26, 2023 Nicholas Ghadiri and Bradley Desir staffed an exhibit table the IEN Conference held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. Rola El Moubadder spoke on an afternoon Sector Panel on Healthcare.

## Metropolis, Calgary

Nov 1 - 3, 2023 PASS' Meghan Wankel Joint presentation was facilitated with Dawn Shave, Alberta Association of Nurses, Cameron Moser, ACCES Employment and Reza Talebi, YMCA's Next Stop Canada, entitled: *Settlement, Employment and Provincial Initiatives to Engage, Support and Integrate Internationally Educated Nurses and Healthcare Professionals into the Canadian Healthcare System*.

## Pathway to Prosperity (P2P) Conference, Montreal

November 20-22, 2023 Meghan Wankel presented the following two posters on behalf of our team and partner organizations with over 1,000 delegates attending: *Provincial Initiatives to Engage, Support and Integrate Internationally Educated Nurses into the Canadian Healthcare System* (Lee, R., Canadic, L., Jessup, H., Wankel, M.); *Supporting Internationally Educated Nurses Pre- to Post-Arrival Through Mentorship Models* (Lee, R., El Moubadder, R. Navroj, J., Vicente, L., Wankel, M.)





# CARE Centre at Conferences & Outreach Activities



## International Health Workforce Collaborative Conference (IHWC)

December 7-8, 2023 Invited by Dr. Margaret Walton-Roberts, Co-Lead Canadian Health Workforce Network, Ruth Lee presented on "Successful Integration of IENs" at Panel 3: Ethical Recruitment and Integration.

## Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO), Toronto

December 16, 2023, Rola El Moubadder and Ruth Lee attended RNAO's International Nursing Interest Group 25th Anniversary at Centennial College.

## Conference Board of Canada, National Immigration Centre, Ottawa

January 23, 2024 Ruth Lee represented CARE Centre attending the virtual meeting and provided input on challenges confronting IENs.

## Immigration Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

February 23, 24, 2024 Rola El Moubadder, Ruth Wojtiuk, and PASS staff attended IRCC-Community Partners Committee conference. Cherry Chan, Case Manager and Member IEN from Hong Kong was among the panelists representing CARE Centre.

## Planning for Canada, Toronto

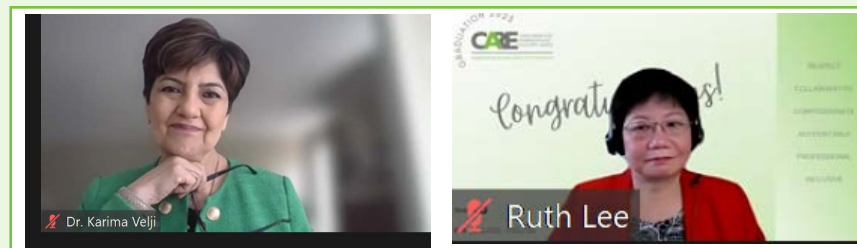
February 28, 2024 Meghan Wankel presented on PASS' support to IENs at the "Arrive with Confidence Networking Event" hosted by Planning for Canada. Ruth Lee also participated in this one-day event.

## Global Skills Conference, Kitchener-Waterloo

March 6, 2024 As a panellist, Ruth Lee presented on IEN integration at the Health Sector Hub sponsored by the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre. Lourdes Vicente staffed an exhibit table and met with delegates.

## Integrated Filipino-Canadian Nurses Association (IFCNA), Toronto

March 8, 2024 Invited by Mark Gravoso, President of the IFCNA, a special information session was conducted by Abigail Lima, Case Manager (who is also an IEN from the Philippines), with Ruth Lee, and Rola El Moubadder in attendance.



# Work Place Integration Program

CARE Centre created the Workplace Integration Program (WIP) to identify barriers to the successful integration of IENs in various healthcare settings and outline practical strategies to navigate these challenges. WIP was developed in direct response to data from Statistics Canada, indicating that over 32,000 nursing positions stood vacant, and the recommendation of the Canadian Nurses Association that the integration of IENs could not only increase the workforce in a timely manner but also add rich cultural representation to organizations serving an increasingly diversified public. CARE Centre is grateful to the Government of Ontario for its funding of the pilot program.

WIP offers customized, innovative learning sessions, focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion, thereby facilitating successful recruitment, seamless work-place integration of IENs and, ultimately, improving retention rates. The seven broad topic areas for audiences from Human Resources (HR), leadership teams, educators, preceptors, interprofessional teams, existing nursing staff and IENs, were designed to equip employers with the skills and knowledge to facilitate a smooth transition and successful integration of IENs into their workforce, and to empower IENs to ask for and receive the tailored supports they need for success. Professional Practice Lead Ruth Wojtiuk, Language Specialist Cara Malla, Case Manager Bessie Nasiopoulos, Program and Membership Liaison Assistant Kesang Yuden and File Management Clerk Maria Ejikeme worked on the pilot.

The WIP has received an excellent response and demand through its initial launch. The initial information session was attended by 187 participants, representing 54 organizations. WIP programming was delivered to 22 organizations, with 926 healthcare professionals participating in 47 educational sessions during February and March 2024, an incredibly accelerated schedule. Most employers (61%) were from the acute care sector, with organizations from the long-term care sector (14%) and community care sector (21%) also offering WIP programming. Most participants were from the employer side (77%) with staff IENs also attending (23%). Surveys revealed that 96% of WIP participants strongly agreed or agreed that the workshop topics and content were relevant to their professional needs and interests.

CARE Centre will continue to deliver WIP programming on a fee for service basis, poised to assist organizations' responses to any changes in the regulatory environment and the continued nursing shortage.





## Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards

The 12th Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards were presented in person in 2023, with some COVID-19 protocols still present in the healthcare workplace. The Awards were established in 2011 as part of CARE Centre's 10th anniversary activities, to commemorate the late Dr. Joan Lesmond, a champion of nursing diversity and inclusion. In 2014 the Awards were expanded with separate categories for RN and RPN winners. To date, CARE Centre has honoured 19 member IENs with the Award.

The 2023 RN IEN of the Year was Nayoung (Amy) Son, from South Korea, who currently works in Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre's Ross Tilley Burn Centre (RTBC). Amy also serves as a safety coordinator of the RTBC and Tory Trauma Program, engaging in quality enhancement projects. She has also started distance teaching to nursing students in South Korea and is an Expert Nurse mentor for CARE Centre's Mentoring Program. The first recipient of the Joan Lesmond Award in 2011 was Loy Asheri, an RN who worked in Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre's Cardiac Critical Care Unit.

"In Canada, nursing unites professionals from around the world, sharing a common goal of providing high-quality care to patients," said Son. "As an IEN from South Korea, I have always been dedicated and resilient in pursuing nursing excellence, which opened the door to my dream job at Sunnybrook Hospital. It was one of the happiest moments of my life. For me, every patient interaction is an opportunity to make a positive impact."

The 2023 RPN IEN of the Year was Michael Dane Quilana, more recently working as an RN at North York General Hospital (NYGH) on the Nursing Resource Team. Nursing Administrative Care Transitions Coordinator Edsel Mutia, RN, who was the third recipient of the Joan Lesmond Award in 2013, submitted the nomination for Michael. Last year's Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards, RN category, was another NYGH nurse, Amina Malick, a Clinical Nurse Educator in the Ambulatory and Cancer Care Program.

**Michael Dane Quilana is a Filipino nurse who practiced in Italy.**

**"As an IEN, I can say that I have been through a lot of challenges to keep practicing the profession I love," he said. "My nursing career started during the height of the COVID pandemic, and I knew I had to step up. Being a nurse is more than just a job, it is a commitment to our patients, to healthcare organizations like North York General Hospital, to have our colleagues' backs when things get tough."**

Nominations are open for the 2024 Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards, with winners selected in the fall with workplace presentations to follow.

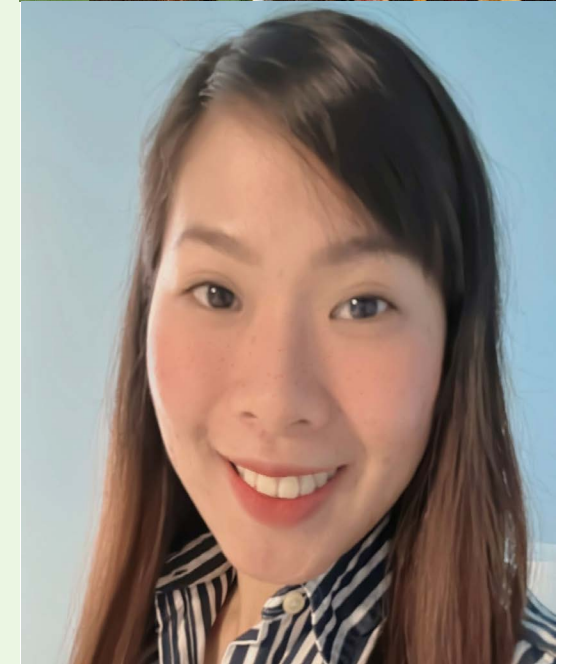
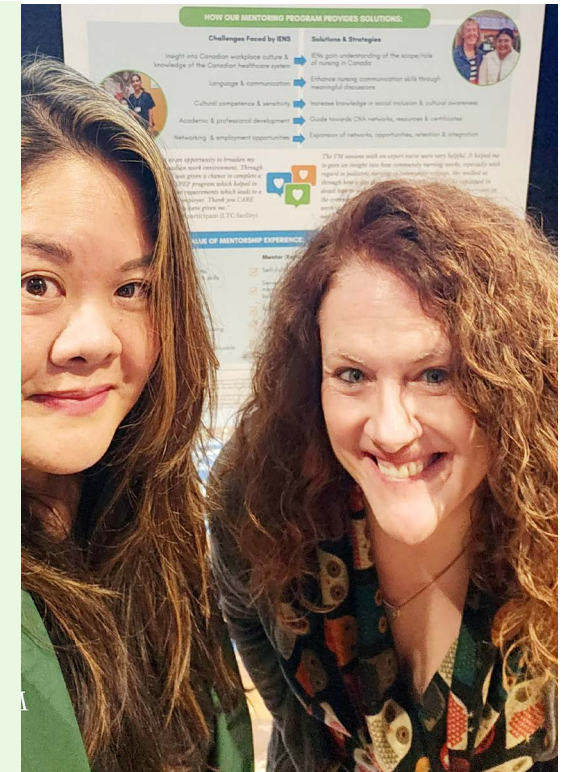




# Statement of Operations

## Financials 2023-2024

	2023	2024
<b>Revenue</b>		
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development	\$1,556,664	\$1,750,069
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada	287,493	329,721
City of Toronto	15,750	16,974
Services	49,378	50,907
Expense recoveries & rebates	-	5,190
Investment (loss) Income	(100,837)	54,811
Grants	2,000	-
Fundraising and donations	-	2,110
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,810,448</b>	<b>\$2,209,782</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Staffing Costs	\$1,419,753	\$1,662,062
Professional Fees and Contract Services	151,415	184,007
Occupancy	103,865	102,456
Resources and materials	46,862	48,960
Meetings, travel and training	18,997	15,900
Office equipment and database	55,075	70,952
Outreach and promotion	18,557	49,442
Communications	14,027	14,991
Insurance	24,953	18,727
Operations	\$1,853,504	\$2,167,497
<b>Total</b>		
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses</b>	<b>\$(43,056)</b>	<b>\$42,285</b>



# Staff, Board Members & Partners

## Management Team

### Executive Director:

Dr. Ruth Lee

### Program Manager:

Rola El Moubadder

### Administrative/Human Resources Coordinator:

Corrine Leblanc

## Support Staff

### Client Services & Data Management Coordinator:

Emmanuel Wilfred

### Program and Membership Liaison Assistant:

Kesang Yuden

### File Management Clerk

Maria Ejikeme

### Professional Practice Lead:

Ruth Wojtiuk

### Digital Specialist:

Lori Washington

### Language Specialist:

Cara Malla

## STARS Case Managers

Ganiat Animashaun

Holly Best

Cherry Chan

Ismail El Assaad

Gilda Gomez, Client Engagement Lead

Luciana Lima

Bessie Nasiopoulos, Professional

Development Lead

Tina Novotny, Communications Lead

Tamsheela Rashid, Social Media Lead

Lourdes Vicente, Mentoring Program Lead

Abigail Lim

## PASS STAFF

### PASS Coordinator:

Meghan Wankel

### Technology Lead/Case Manager:

Mehrzad (Nicholas) Ghadirri

### Marketing and Promotions Officer:

Mark Piercey

### Program Assistant:

Bradley Desir

## Board of Directors

Phil Schalm (Chairperson)

Lesley Hirst (Vice Chair)

Venkata Marella (Treasurer)

Murray Krock (Secretary)

Sean McGrady

Ella Ferris

Janet Kwansah

Elga Nikolova

Dr. Elaine Santa Mina

(Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year

Awards Committee Chair)

John R. Vespa

Hameed Zahedi

## Advisory Committee

### Community Organizations

Immigrants Working Centre

WoodGreen

Kingston Employment and Youth Services

### Employers

Pioneer Elder Care Inc.

Unity Health Toronto

William Osler Health System

Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care

University of Windsor

## Academic Institutions

Sheridan College

McMaster University

University of Windsor

## Regulatory Body

College of Nurses of Ontario

## Employer Mentoring Partners

Access Alliance Community Health Centre

Bayshore Home Health

CarePartners

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)

Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC)

London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC)

Niagara Health System (NHS)

North York General Hospital

Pioneer Elder Care Inc.

Southlake Regional Health Centre

St. Joseph's Hospital – Hamilton

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Center (SBHS)

-St. Johns Rehab

-Holland Centre

-Sunnybrook Hospital

The Hospital for Sick Children

Unity Health Toronto

-St. Michael's Hospital

-St. Joseph Health Centre

-Providence Healthcare

Victoria Order of Nurses (VON)

Women's College Hospital

Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care

## Association Mentoring Partners

Registered Nurses Association of Ontario

WeRPN Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario



Supporting Nurses Back into Practice

### Toronto

365 Bloor Street East, Suite 1901,  
Toronto, ON M4W 3L4  
Phone: (416) 226-2800

### Hamilton

College Boreal 120 King Street West, Plaza Level,  
Hamilton, ON L8P 4V2  
Phone: 1-905-521-1777 ext. 302  
Toll Free: 1-866-515-0018 ext. 302

### London/Windsor

c/o WILL Employment Solutions  
141 Dundas St, 4th Floor, London, ON  
N6A 1G3  
Phone: (519) 719-1793

### St. Catharines Office

c/o: Pioneer Elder Care Inc.  
9 St. Helena Street  
St. Catharines, ON L2N 3Z9  
Phone: (905) 521-1777 ext. 302  
Toll free: 1 -866-515-0018

### Peel Offices

c/o: WeRPN  
5025 Orbitor Drive, Building 5, Suite 200  
Mississauga, ON L4W 4Y5  
Phone: (416) 226-2800

c/o Newcomer Centre of Peel  
165 Dundas Street West, Suite 116  
Mississauga, Ontario  
L5B 2N6, Canada  
Phone: (416) 226-2800

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Visit [www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org) to make a donation

[info@care4nurses.org](mailto:info@care4nurses.org)  
[www.care4nurses.org](http://www.care4nurses.org)



Immigration, Refugees  
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés  
et Citoyenneté Canada

