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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 fulfill 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 Message

CARE Centre for Internationally Educated Nurses' (CARE Centre) fiscal year end is a pivotal time to reflect on the organization's many accomplishments from 2024 to 2025, the middle year of our Strategic Plan.

Our priority Strategic Objectives, to effect health care system change, and to design and deliver innovative, effective programs tailored to the needs of internationally educated nurses (IENs) and employers have been significantly met. None of CARE Centre's success is possible without our ever-widening circle of supporters, and I thank everyone who contributes to the cause of IEN achievement in all their capacities. CARE Centre's staff are on the forefront of those efforts, and I am filled with gratitude for their commitment and ability to constantly exceed expectations.

CARE Centre would not be able to strive for further accomplishment without the guiding hands of our outstanding board of directors, a multi-talented group led by our Chair Phil Schalm. Thank you, Phil, and all board members, for your unwavering leadership, and the gift of your time and expertise. To our partners, in the health care sector and in settlement and immigration, we want to recognize your support and collaboration on behalf of CARE Centre and our member IENs. In 2024 we launched our inaugural Mentorship Excellence Award, presented to Shirley Bell, Registered Nurse and Educator at Unity Health's St. Michael's Hospital, in recognition of her many years of mentoring CARE Centre clients. We also thank our mentors from the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) who partner with our Pre- and Post-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) team, in welcoming and mentoring IENs around the country. We are very excited about serving on the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing's newly established "IEN Mentorship Advisory Group" with Program Manager Rola El Mobadder and I sharing CARE Centre's insights and learnings. I am also honoured to be a member of CNA's Racism in Nursing Advisory Committee.

Once again, we had a robust National Nursing Week and graduation in 2024, with nursing leaders donating their time to connect with our staff, stakeholders and IENs to share their experience and positive outlook for the future, including Canada's Chief Nursing Officer Dr. Leigh Chapman and Order of Canada recipient, long time supporter of CARE Centre, Dr. Angela Cooper Braitwaite. We thank them for their contributions, as we do all our partners in IEN education, employment, regulation, and professional associations. CARE Centre welcomed Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care's Learning Inter-Professionally Healthcare Accelerator (LIPHA) Program as a new partner, providing free, game-based online learning for IENs working in the long-term care sector. We also partnered with the University of Toronto and Toronto Metropolitan University to guide the content of the new Transition to Practice course that will be mandatory for IEN applicants to the College of Nurses of Ontario under their new licensing requirements.

Many of our IENs start working for Ontario health care employers while in the registration process, so they can transition to regulated nursing roles once their licensing is complete. CARE Centre hosts numerous "Meet the Employer" sessions on Zoom, and additional in-person recruiting opportunities. Some employers were at the table when CARE Centre was created 24 years ago; we value their continuing efforts in supporting IENs. Employers continue to invite CARE Centre to present our Workplace Integration Program to their nurses and other staff, raising awareness of how much customized orientation can assist IENs in their career success and strengthen a healthy work environment. We will continue to evolve the program together, fostering IENs' future contributions to Ontario and Canadian healthcare. To our funders, the Ontario Government, through Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, thank you for your continued commitment to CARE Centre and our services to IENs, ensuring improved health care for all.



Mr. Phil Schalm - Chair

Message from the Chair

As CARE Centre was finalizing its funding contract with the Province of Ontario, we received the happy news that Dr. Ruth Lee has been awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal, to be presented by the

Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) during Nursing Week 2025. This is an honour that is well-deserved. Dr. Lee was previously recognized by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO) with a Lifetime Achievement Award, not only for her own academic and clinical career, but importantly, for her on-going efforts to assist internationally educated nurses (IENs) achieve universal appreciation as a crucial component in a better Canadian health care system. Ruth is supported by her dedicated CARE Centre staff, together achieving another year of exemplary performance in providing gold standard services to IENs. I know that I am speaking for all members of our Board in thanking CARE Centre's many stakeholders and partners for their continued commitment to the organization at a time when IENs are needed more than ever.

We are thankful for Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's funding to extend our services to include support to IENs post-arrival for the next three years through CARE Centre's Pre- and Post-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) program. PASS is poised to expand its services, with on-the-ground case managers in four additional provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick). This vote of confidence for expansion is matched by continued funding from Ontario's Department of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to support more streamlined IEN registration and improved employment outcomes. The support from these funders directly addresses and reaffirms CARE Centre's organizational priority of providing system-based solutions to our country-wide nursing shortage, a genuine health human resources crisis. Our funders ensure CARE's sustainability as an innovator as we increase programs and services to IENs in Ontario and across Canada.

Nurses are the backbone of Canadian health care, with IENs comprising about 10 percent of the total Canadian nursing workforce. But there are serious issues that we must continue to address.

In Ontario, the preferred destination for many newcomers, 13 percent of nurses are IENs. The College of Nurses of Ontario has seen a surge in the number of IENs applying for registration, with 46.2 percent of applications coming from IENs, driving up growth in the nursing supply. However, the CNO also states that IENs have a lower renewal rate compared to domestically educated nurses, which attests that CARE Centre still has important work to do in the integration of IENs into our workplaces.

At a national level, an earlier prediction of a nursing shortage of 60,000 nurses nationwide by 2022 now has ballooned to a shortage of 117,000 nurses by 2030. Statistics Canada says that, of all occupations, nursing has the most job vacancies. A 2024 survey of 5,595 nurses by the Canadian Federation of Nursing Unions revealed that 30 per cent reported dissatisfaction with their career and 40 percent intend to leave nursing.

IENs are here to meet the needs in Canada's nursing workforce, bringing global skills and experience, heightened by CARE Centre's expert preparation for relaunching their careers.

Staff & Office Changes

CARE Centre thanked CARE Centre member IEN Tamsheela Rashid for her service as Case Manager and Social Media Lead when she departed the organization to further her education. We welcomed member RN Maninder Khutan to case manage her fellow IENs on contract. We also said a grateful goodbye to Case Manager Ganiat Animashaun after she expanded her family, with her maternity leave Case Manager, member IEN Luciana Lima, joining the CARE Centre staff. Member IEN and Case Manager Natolina Marius-Springer returned from her maternity leave, covered by English as a Second Language teacher and Communications Lead Tina Novotny, who moved into case management with the Pre- and Post-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) program. With a new three-year funding agreement including expanded services, Coordinator Meghan Wankel was promoted to Program Manager.

CARE Centre secured new office space with partner organizations in Peel Region. Case managers see clients and offer workshops in person at two locations with COSTI Immigrant Services, as well as Achêv. COSTI began serving Italian newcomers in 1952, and has broadened into a multicultural agency providing employment, educational, settlement and social services to all immigrant communities and individuals in need of assistance. Over 30 years, Achêv has become one of the largest providers of employment, settlement, language, women, youth, and technology solutions services throughout Canada. CARE Centre also continues to offer services at the Newcomer Centre of Peel in Mississauga. 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 WILL Employment Solutions. 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 Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) living in Ontario, is funded by the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. Every STARS client is assigned a case manager who works one-on-one with the IEN, knowing their unique circumstances and goals, to guide them on their journey to registration and employment. Several STARS case managers are themselves CARE Centre member IENs who want to give back to their fellow newcomer nurses with the perspective of their own lived experience. Other case managers are Canadian educated nurses, settlement sector professionals or language specialists. For clients' convenience, most client counselling sessions take place on Zoom, but case managers are always available to meet in person at any of CARE Centre's many locations, and also communicate over email and phone.



The STARS Client Engagement Lead discusses language proficiency with new members, which must be equivalent to an average Canadian Language Benchmark of 6. CARE Centre delivers the Institutional Canadian English Language Benchmark Assessment for Nurses (iCELBAN) to clients to identify any of the four skills (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening) which may need development and offers self-directed language and communication curricula on the Canvas learning platform. Case managers guide clients through a Nursing Readiness Assessment (NRA), developed by CARE Centre to orient new members to nursing in Canada. The assessment helps in the creation of a customized service plan to further build on an IEN's strengths and to identify areas for improvement.



Once the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) receives a client's education verification, many will be directed to complete the NCLEX Registered Nurse exam or the Rex-PN Registered Practical nurse exam. If the CNO assess the IEN's education as not equivalent to Ontario nursing qualifications, case managers can assist the client in accessing bridging programs to address knowledge gaps. If the CNO identifies language or currency of practice concerns, the IEN may take part in the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership (SPEP). The SPEP was piloted by CARE Centre with University Health Network and adopted by the CNO and Ontario Health as a formalized program to address safe practice. Case managers also assist clients with obtaining non-regulated employment in health care to orient them to the Canadian system while in the registration process. Clients can also take advantage of CARE Centre's mentoring program opportunities with in-person or virtual placements with Expert Nurses for further learning and networking in the nursing community.

STARS

STARS Signature Programming

Now in its 24th year of service, CARE Centre has developed signature programming to address many aspects of IEN education, registration, employment, and integration. The nursing landscape is constantly evolving, and CARE Centre stays ahead of changes affecting IENs, to ease their challenges and promote career success. Along with a full monthly slate of Professional Development courses and workshops, CARE Centre piloted the Supervised Practice Experience Partnership (SPEP), which the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) adapted with Ontario Health to administer clinical placements for IENs to update their currency of practice. It has now been mirrored in other Canadian provinces. Also under our Mentoring Program, Observational Job Shadowing and Virtual Mentoring offer multiple opportunities for IENs to gain Canadian experience and in-person exposure to a variety of nursing sectors and workplaces.

Exam Preparation has always been a significant area of activity for CARE Centre, offering NCLEX preparation through our learning platform with weekly support sessions from our Professional Practice Lead. Also key to RN registration is the Objective Structured Clinical Exam, the OSCE for nurses known as the Registered Nurses Canadian Competency Assessment Program (RNCCAP) as delivered by Touchstone Institute. Our RNCCAP preparation participants have a very high success rate. Periodically, Registered Practical Nurse exam preparation for the Rex-PN is also offered and is being updated.

More recently CARE Centre piloted our Workplace Integration Program (WIP), designed for employers to deliver on-site to IENs, nursing staff and health professionals in other disciplines, human resources and other departments. In its initial rollout WIP was presented without charge to employers thanks to a generous special grant from the Ontario government. The uptake was significant, and there is continued interest in WIP, available on a fee for service basis for interested employers. WIP leverages the goals of the Nurse Retention Toolkit: Improving the Working Lives of Nurses in Canada, created by Health Canada under the leadership of Chief Nursing Officer Dr. Leigh Chapman. Participating employer surveys show a great appreciation of the WIP program, evaluating elements in the highest percentages.



In a recent programming development, CARE Centre has partnered with the University of Toronto and Toronto Metropolitan University's continuing education departments to offer the Transition to Practice (TTP) course curriculum. Because the CNO was moving to a more expedited application system, they created a ninth registration requirement of the TTP for all RN and RPN candidates. Also offered through Colleges Ontario, the university-level offerings are enhanced with synchronous online teaching by CARE Centre's own member IEN case managers.

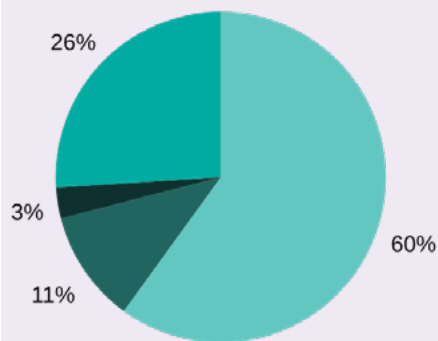
Read more about CARE Centre's cornerstone programming in the annual report and on our website at www.care4nurses.org.

Learn More About the STARS Program



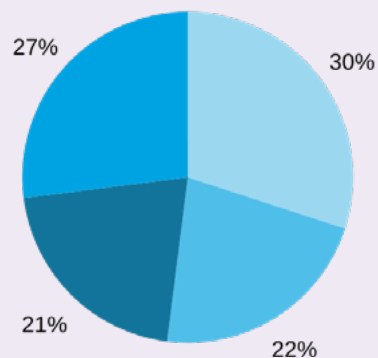
Participant Profile

Immigration Status



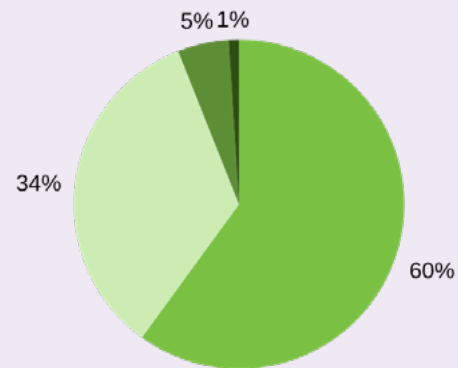
Permanent Resident: 60%
Canadian Citizen: 11%
Convention Refugee: 3%
Refugee Claimant: 26%

Immigration Class



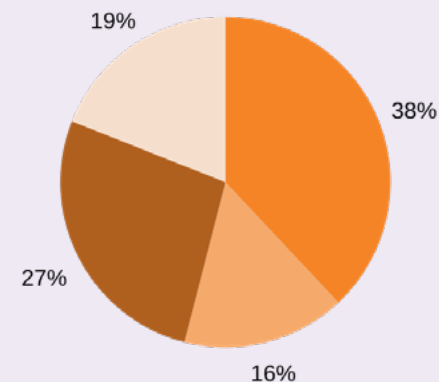
Independent/Professional Skilled: 30%
Family Sponsored: 22%
Other: 21%
Convention Refugee: 27%

Level of Education in Country of Origin



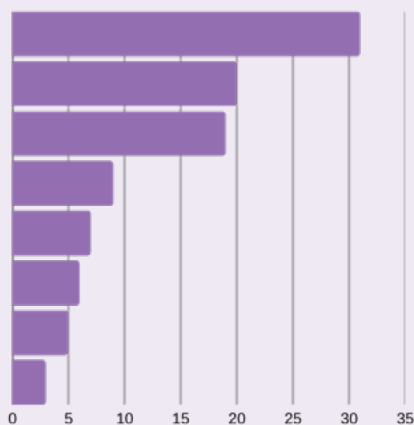
Bachelor Degree: 60%
College Diploma: 34%
Masters Degree: 5%
PhD: 1%

Length of Time in Canada



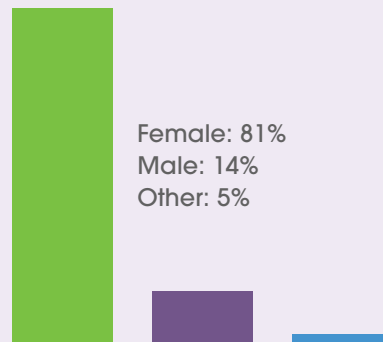
> 4 Years: 38%
2 - 4 Years: 16%
< 1 Year: 27%
1 - 2 Years: 19%

Country of Origin



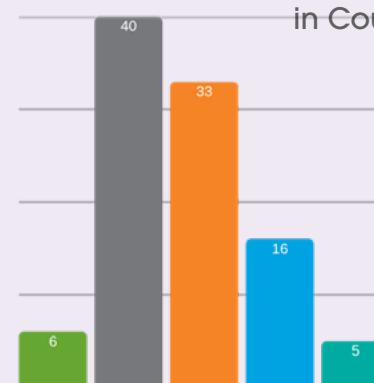
Other: 31%
India: 20%
Philippines: 19%
Nigeria: 9%
Ghana: 7%
Uganda: 6%
Kenya: 5%
Brazil: 3%

Gender



Female: 81%
Male: 14%
Other: 5%

Nursing Experience in Country of Origin



None: 6%
Under 5 Years: 40%
6 - 10 Years: 33%
11 - 20 Years: 16%
Over 20 Years: 5%

Program Updates



EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES:

312

One-On-One Employment Counselling Participants

70 clients

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



SPECIALIZED WORKSHOPS & PDs:

FREE

1002 clients

Attended **57** workshops

PAID

120 clients

Attended **13** workshops



MEMBER STATS:

532

New Applications

292

New Members

91

Members passed CNO RN RPN Exams

134

CNO, RN, RPN Registrations

184

CNO, RN, RPN Employment



COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS ASSESSMENT:

185

384 clients

Communication and Workplace Culture Workshops/Webinars



COURSE ATTENDANCE

327 clients

Career Development Webinars

288 clients

Employment Workshops and Webinars

342 clients

Nursing Skills Workshops

165 clients

Examination and Licensure Preparation Workshops

Learn More About CARE Centre Programs & Events



Professional Development

CARE Centre has been developing and delivering integral course and workshop content for 24 years, forecasting, identifying, and addressing the educational and professional needs of IENs to excel in their journey to registration and employment. Based on our individualized case management approach, data analyzed from our participant surveys, and our close working relationship with stakeholders, we continuously update the Professional Development (PD) program to fulfill IENs' specific educational needs. Our PD program has been extremely successful in meeting IENs' needs and goals with a 97 to 99% approval rating.

"It was the best workshop I ever had. As new IENs, it gave us hope and confidence for how to excel in our field. I appreciate the efforts of CARE to teach and support IENs. It really means a lot to us (to me!). Knowing that there are people and organizations that put in effort to support us is a great help. Thank you so much!"

Our PD program, delivered in an interactive, hybrid format, is specific and timely, reflecting changing licensure and job-related requirements. It focuses on four nursing subject areas: Communication and Workplace Integration, Nursing Essential and Technical Skills, Licensure and Exam Preparation, and Employment and Career Development. Information sessions are offered on a monthly basis both virtually and in-person at our Toronto office and select co-locations. CARE Centre staff also present information sessions to stakeholder organizations such as health care employers or settlement sector partners, among others.

Nursing communication examines best practices including conflict resolution, therapeutic Nurse/Client relationship and health teaching. There are workshops on collaborative interactions with the interdisciplinary team, emphasizing effective strategies and tools. Accurate and relevant Documentation and Verbal Reporting are valuable trainings, and the Employment Strategies Workshop, covering three days of resume review, cover letter preparation and mock interviews is in constant high demand.

Clinical in-person workshops with expert instructors include Wound Care, IV Therapy, Medication Safety, ECG, Health and Physical Assessment, Oncology Care, Infection Control, Dementia Care, and other core competencies. We are grateful to our employer partners who offer clinical workshops at their organizations to meet and mentor CARE Centre members in person. For member IENs to have Diversity, Equity and Inclusion forefront in their career development, CARE Centre offers training in Indigenous Health Care and Building Solidarity with Black Nurses to Overcome Systemic Racism.



CARE Centre's educational offerings also include exam preparation, such as for the Next Generation NCLEX RN exam, the Rex-PN RPN exam, and the Registered Nurses Canadian Competency Assessment Program (RNCCAP), the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) for IENs. CARE Centre has been pleased to partner with many health care organizations in our Meet the Employer series, presenting webinars and in some cases performing direct recruitment.

Each year CARE Centre offers a special slate of Nursing Week programming and celebrates our members' success in a virtual graduation with notable keynote speakers. In 2024 our guest speaker was Dr. Angela Cooper-Brathwaite, a nursing leader and recipient of the Order of Canada, with the valedictorian address delivered by member IEN Lina Al Watter. CARE Centre has a full slate of pre-recorded webinars available for public viewing on our website, including employment opportunities in other provinces and regions, presentations from nurse leaders, direction on accessing financial supports and other relevant subjects.

Mentorship Program: Observational Job Shadowing and Virtual Mentoring

CARE Centre's Mentorship Program offers both in-person and virtual opportunities for member IENs to interact with and learn from Expert Nurses in a variety of fields and settings. It's a highly valued program offering as it provides localized experience and networking connections in the nursing community. Observational Job Shadowing (OJS) was developed early in CARE Centre's organizational history and has remained a key element in IEN preparation for career success. The Virtual Mentoring (VM) program was created to continue the mentorship program during the COVID-19 pandemic and continues in an evolved form post pandemic based on positive feedback from clients. Expert Nurses with specializations now meet with groups of three member IENs over Zoom, which has enabled CARE Centre clients to learn about areas such as Operating Room nursing which was previously not possible through in-person OJS placements.



CARE Centre has 24 formal employer partners in acute, long-term and community care and professional associations. They are located in the Greater Toronto Area, Peel Region, Hamilton, Niagara, London, and Kingston. There are placements available in a variety of nursing practices, including Medical-Surgical, Emergency, Critical Care, Child and Maternal Health, among others. In 2024-2025, 70 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. The SPEP program offers a minimum of 140 clinical hours to update currency of practice and meet language proficiency while providing orientation to the Canadian health care system. Both OJS and VM can be helpful preparation for successful SPEP placements and are also an excellent foundation for IENs pursuing Temporary Licensing. Of total Mentorship participants, 51 completed OJS and VM, while 19 were able to update their currency of practice and demonstrate language proficiency with SPEP. On some happy occasions, our member IENs receive job offers from employers at the completion of their placements.

"I am emailing you to let you know that I got an offer for the Nurse Clinic at CarePartners. I am so excited to start making a difference in the community as an RN now! Thank you so much for all your help and support throughout this journey."

- Gabriela Davis, RN

"OJS was very beneficial for me professionally, it helped build my confidence. By closely observing the handling of responsibilities, problem solving, and the decision-making process involved in nursing, OJS gave me a better understanding of the role and its requirements."

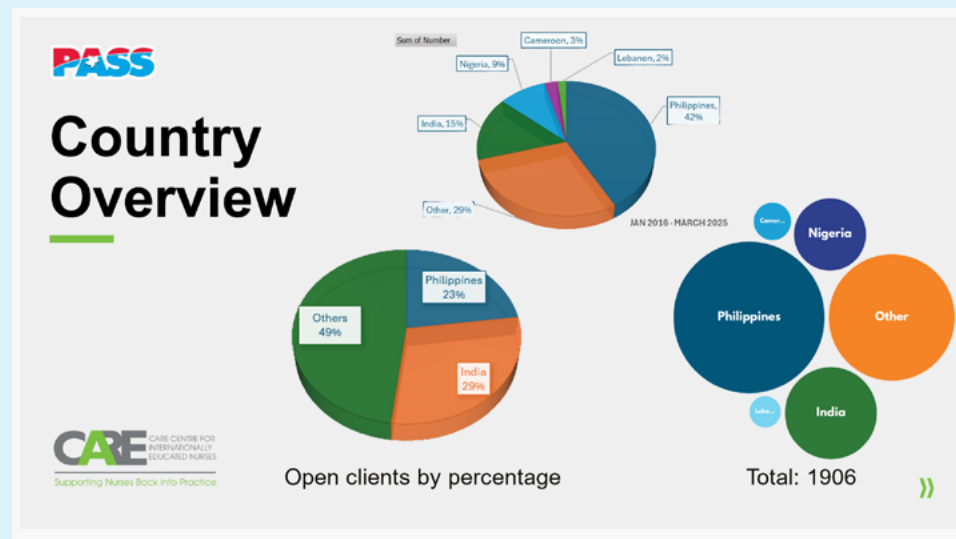
- Gloria Baker, RPN



PASS Pre-Arrival Supports & Services

The Pre-Arrival Supports and Services (PASS) program completed another successful year assisting internationally educated nurses (IENs) who chose Canada as their new homes to re-establish their nursing careers. PASS, which is free of charge for eligible participants, assists IENs who have completed their nursing education from a recognized program and have been accepted for immigration as permanent residents or convention refugees. PASS is grateful to IRCC for a three-year funding renewal, allowing for an expansion of services post arrival with case managers serving clients across the country from partner agencies in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick. Virtual case management is core to PASS, with IENs' preparation experience customized to their circumstances and needs. The program is now called Pre- and Post-Arrival Supports and Services, reflecting its mandate to assist IENs in all provinces and territories in obtaining licensure, continuing education, enhancing language and communication skills, securing employment and expanding their careers. PASS will continue to

offer mentorship opportunities with Canadian Nurses Association members, who are paired with IENs by location and nursing specializations. The full slate of live orientation webinars will continue in rotation and there will be exciting new presentations developed to address current realities in the Canadian nursing landscape. Shared resources with settlement organizations, nursing regulators, educators, employers and professional associations are integral to PASS clients' success. From



January 2016 to the end of the current fiscal year, March 31, 2025, PASS has served 1,906 IENs from 105 countries. In the last fiscal year 300 individuals joined the PASS program. The top five countries of origin for participants over the last fiscal year were Nigeria, India, Philippines, Eritrea and Ghana. PASS receives membership applications through the website at www.pass4nurses.org, as well as through the Pre-Arrival Partners Portal administered by the YMCA. PASS continues to assist IENs in identifying transferable skills and finding pre-registration employment in the health care sector as they work to achieve their Canadian nursing goals.



Learn More About PASS

PASS International Outreach

To increase awareness of the free services offered through PASS, two PASS representatives, Program Manager Meghan Wankel and Marketing Officer Mark Piercey, travelled to the Philippines (November 2024) and India (January 2025). The goal of the trip was to promote the Pre- and Post-Arrival Supports and Services Program to ensure more Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs) receive the assistance that is available to them before and after arrival in Canada, after they have been accepted for Permanent Residency or as Convention Refugees. Along with presenting to IENs, additional objectives were to meet with stakeholders in Canada's top two countries of IEN migration, including diplomatic representatives, educational institutions and professional nursing associations. Preliminary outreach to promote the visits also generated analytical data through digital media to identify common themes around IEN immigration to Canada. Meetings were held virtually, blended and in-person to reach as many parties as possible while on the ground in the Philippines and India. The team received very warm receptions and on-going communication upon their return, securing new channels in supporting IENs enroute to their new lives and careers in Canada.



[Learn More About PASS](#)

CARE Centre Outreach Activities

CARE Centre reaches out to strategic stakeholders throughout the year, including government, nursing regulators, educators, employers and professional associations, and other organizations supporting IENs, through both our STARS and PASS networks. Chief Nursing Officer of Canada Dr. Leigh Chapman, and Dr. Karima Velji, Chief of Nursing & Professional Practice and Assistant Deputy Minister for the Province of Ontario, continue to support CARE Centre's outreach efforts through special events such as our virtual graduation ceremonies. They have helped raise awareness about the important role IENs play in expanding and enhancing Canada's nursing workforce. CARE Centre collaborates with many organizations in the immigration and settlement sector, either individually or through umbrella organizations such as OCASI (Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants) and CASSA (Council of Agencies Serving South Asians), as well as the two North/East and South/West Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs). CARE Centre is grateful to our many employer partners who deliver information "Meet the Employer" session or host our members on their premises to offer health care training opportunities. To follow are select outreach activities we undertook over the last fiscal year.

Society Of Internationally Educated Nurses of North America (SIENNA)

April 6, Luciana Lima, Case Manager at CARE Centre, joined the panel discussion as a panelist at their virtual event "Voices Unheard: Amplifying the Stories of IENs".

Integrated Fil-Canadian Nurses Association (IFCNA)

April 7, Abigail Lim, Case Manager (who is also an IEN from the Philippines), attended IFCNA 5th Anniversary Celebration in Toronto where CARE Centre was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation.

Ontario Internationally Educated Nurses Course Consortium

April 17 and September 25, Ruth Lee, as member of the Advisory Committee, attended the Consortium's (Trent University, Toronto Metropolitan University, York University, Windsor University) Program Advisory Committee Meeting and provided input from CARE Centre's perspective.

Regina Immigrant Women Centre (RIWC)

April 25, Ruth Lee, Rola, Bessie Nasiopoulos, Case Manager and Professional Practice Lead, and Abigail Lim, Case Manager did an onsite visit and met with Neelu Sachdev, Executive Director and Mona Darwish, Manager to discuss collaborative opportunities in supporting IENs from our PASS program who are settling in Saskatchewan.

National Nursing Week Mentoring Focus

May 10, Ruth Wojtiuk shared her personal journey of a nurse of six decades and presented on our Workplace Integration Program. Meghan Wankel, PASS Program Manager, presented on CARE Centre's collaboration with the Canadian Nurses Association. Lourdes Vicente, Case Manager and Mentoring Program Lead, presented on Observational Job Shadowing and Virtual Mentoring. Ruth Lee presented our first Mentorship Excellence Award at a ceremony hosted by St. Michael's Hospital to Shirley Bell, Educator at Unity Health Toronto, in recognition of her commitment in mentoring CARE Centre clients over the years.



Toronto Newcomer Day

May 23, staff from PASS and STARS Hosted a display table at Toronto City Hall's Nathan Phillips Square to showcase our work to newcomers.

Manitoba Ministry of Labour and Immigration

June 11, per a request by the Manitoba Ministry of Labour and Immigration, Phil Schalm, Ruth Lee, and representatives of our PASS and STARS programs met with the Honourable Malaya Marcelino, Minister of Labour and Immigration and her assistants at our Toronto office to share best practices for supporting IENs.

Newcomer Centre of Peel

August 14, Tina Novotny and Luciana Lima attended the Newcomer Centre of Peel's Educational Forum at Mississauga Valley Park exhibiting with community groups and newcomer families to support the Settlement Worker in Schools (SWIS) program.

CARE Centre at Conferences

Throughout the year, CARE Centre has a high-profile presence at a variety of conferences across the country, affiliated with a variety of national, regional and provincial organizations. CARE Centre submits conference presentation abstracts, and we are frequently invited to deliver presentations, both oral and poster, either on behalf of our own working experience with IENs and employers, or in collaboration with other nursing, academic, professional organizations, and settlement sector partners. CARE Centre supports IEN research by joining academic teams, and through our own data collection. We share the findings from these activities through presentations at conferences such as the Partners in the Integration and Education of IENs (PIE-IENs), Pathways to Prosperity, or the annual Metropolis immigration conference. Conference attendance and presentations support the on-going collection of data on our member IENs, from both the Pre-and Post-Arrival Services IRCC federally funded program, and the Supports, Training and Access to Regulated-employment Services funded by the Government of Ontario. CARE Centre regularly works with nursing Master's and PhD candidates to support their research, assisting them in their academic careers through publications and presentations to introduce their work to the nursing community. To follow are a selection of our attendance at conferences in various locations across Canada.

April 15, 16 Nursing Leadership Network Conference, Niagara on the Lake

Rola and Lourdes did an oral presentation on *The Path to Successful IEN Workplace Inclusion and Integration*, with Ruth Lee, Ruth Wojtiuk and Lourdes Vicente.

April 22, 24 Community Nursing Conference, University of Toronto

Meghan Wankel, Ruth Wojtiuk and Vanessa House, Canadian Nurses' Association mentor, did an oral presentation on *What We Need to Do to Evolve as an Inclusive Practice Community: Successful Transition of Internationally Educated Nurses*. The exhibit table was staffed by Mark Piercey, Promotion and Marketing Officer PASS Program, Luciana Lima, Case Manager with Rola and Ruth Lee in attendance.



CARE Centre at Conferences

April 25-27 PIE-IEN 15th National Conference, Regina

Partners in Integration and Education of IEN Conference Ruth Lee did an oral presentation on *Successful Transition and Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses into the Workforce*. Bessie Nasiopoulos and Abigail Lim did a poster presentation on *Recruit, Integrate and Retain IENs: CARE Centre's Workplace Integration Program*. Rola is co-author for both presentations.

June 11 Planning for Canada Partners Meeting, Halifax

Meghan Wankel attended the strategic planning sessions with pre-arrival partners and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

June 24 Registered Nurses Association of Ontario AGM, Toronto

Ruth Lee and Rola El Moubadder attended proceedings; Mark Piercey and Tina Novotny exhibited at the annual general meeting.

Oct. 9-10 Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants Leaders' Forum

Ruth Lee and a number of team members attended and hosted an exhibit at the OCASI 2024 Leadership Forum. Mark Piercey, Marketing and Promotion Officer, Nicholas Ghadiri, Case Manager and Technical Lead, and Tina Novotny, Case Manager and Communications Lead did a virtual presentation on *Adapting to Modern Work Models: Navigating Remote and Hybrid Environments*. CARE Centre also hosted an exhibit table at the Forum with Holly Best and Gilda Gomes Case Managers, Ruth Lee and Rola in attendance.

Oct. 30, 31 Metropolis Conference, Vancouver

Meghan Wankel delivered a joint presentation facilitated with the Alberta Association of Nurses, ACCES Employment and 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*.

Nov. 26, 27 Pathways to Prosperity Conference, Vancouver

Meghan Wankel, Mark Piercey and Tina Novotny attended and hosted two poster presentations: *What We Need to Do to Facilitate Successful Integration of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs): CARE Centre's Workplace Integration Program* and *Fostering an Inclusive Digital Environment for Newcomers*. Abigail Lim chaired and delivered a virtual oral presentation *Building a Stronger Nursing Workforce: Virtual Integration for Internationally Educated Nurses* featuring the *Learning Inter-Professionally Healthcare Accelerator (LIPHA)*.



Workplace Integration Program

Diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace are crucial in building a safe and non-judgmental work environments conducive to successful integration of Internationally Educated Nurses (IENs). As newcomers, many IENs are confronted with systemic discriminatory and antiracial behaviours increasing their vulnerability and hindering their integration into the workplace. There are an array of factors contributing to biases which include IENs' race, culture, language, differences in nursing practice, and role accountabilities. This results in IENs experiencing feelings of stress, powerlessness and being marginalized by their colleagues professionally. CARE Centre created the Workplace Integration Program (WIP) to address these factors and others, working with employers to identify barriers to IEN integration, outlining practical strategies based on nursing research to overcome them.

With a special grant from the Ontario government, CARE Centre piloted WIP broadly across the nursing employer sectors with participants from Acute, Long-term and Community care. WIP programming was delivered to 22 organizations, with 926 healthcare professionals participating in 47 educational sessions during the pilot, with the majority of employers (61%) from the acute care sector. Organizations from the long-term care sector formed 14% of participants, and 21% were from the community care sector. Most participants were from administration, (77%) with staff IENs also attending (23%).

Post-Educational sessions surveys showed that 90% of participants agreed that the webinars met their learning needs and facilitated reflection on topics related to implicit biases, racism, structural inequities, explicit discrimination, compromised health outcomes, and increased awareness of diverse opinions and attitudes. WIP presentations helped employers identify and address systemic discriminatory and antiracial behaviours targeting IENs, a crucial step to building teams where members are individually and collectively able to overcome challenges.

Employers identified various results. Heightened awareness allowed IENs to contribute vibrant ideas and innovative approaches with a global perspective while achieving personal and professional goals; the WIP helped employers embrace cultural humility practices regardless of race, language, and ethnicity; the program created an enhanced sense of belonging, fulfillment, and self-efficacy for IENs, allowing them to speak out and challenge stereotypes. WIP training increased IENs' visibility regarding underemployment and underrepresentation in leadership positions. Employers noted IENs improved patient-centred care by communicating with patients in their native language, leading to better outcomes and equitable access to health care. Finally, through WIP's knowledge transfer, "train the trainers" approach, the program enabled health care leaders, managers, nurses, researchers, and clinical practitioners to work more effectively within diverse cultural, racial, linguistic, and intersectional teams by providing a basis for continuous education.





Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards

CARE Centre has presented the Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards to RNs since 2011, expanding the program to recognize one RN and one RPN in its fourth year. To date 23 member IENs have been recognized as Joan Lesmond Award-winners. CARE Centre was delighted to present the awards to two new employers, as others have had repeated winners. In 2024, the RN IEN of the Year was Jane Roxas, an oncology nurse with University Health Network's Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, originally from the Philippines.

"In my journey as an Internationally Educated Nurse, I have had many different experiences that have given me a stronghold to be committed to nursing," said Roxas. "My Case Manager Gilda and CARE Centre supported me in many ways, and I try to reflect their values in my practice."

The RPN winner was Dawa Tshering of St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, an IEN from Tibet who works in the Acute Medicine Unit. The awards are named after the late Dr. Joan Lesmond, a nursing leader who championed IENs' full recognition and inclusion in Canadian health care.

"It means so much to me to be recognized with the Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Award," said Tshering. "Coming to Canada to register and find nursing employment was not an easy process. I want to thank my family and friends, as well as CARE Centre for their guidance and referrals, especially my Case Manager Lourdes."

Nominations are open for the Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year Awards 2025. More information and the online form are available on the CARE Centre website with a deadline of Friday, September 12th. Member IENs should speak with their case managers to submit a nomination.



Statement of Operations

Financials 2024–2025

	2024	2025
Revenue		
Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development	\$1,750,069	\$1,594,273
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada	329,721	547,035
City of Toronto	50,907	51,910
Services	16,974	9,101
Expense recoveries & rebates	5,190	5,922
Investment (loss) Income	54,811	\$77,044
Fundraising and donations	2,110	7,498
Total	\$2,209,782	\$2,292,783
Expenses		
Staffing Costs	\$1,662,062	\$1,797,196
Professional Fees and Contract Services	184,007	128,749
Occupancy	102,456	98,723
Resources and materials	48,960	51,832
Meetings, travel and training	15,900	41,095
Office equipment and database	70,952	56,015
Outreach and promotion	49,442	27,709
Communications	14,991	19,402
Insurance	18,727	19,328
Operations	\$2,167,497	\$2,240,049
Total		
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$42,285	\$ 52,734



Staff, Board Members & Partners

Management Team

Executive Director:

Dr. Ruth Lee

Program Manager:

Rola El Moubadder

Administrative/Human Resources Coordinator:

Corrine Leblanc

Director of Finance

Diana Sciarra

Support Staff

Client Services & Data Management Coordinator:

Emmanuel Wilfred

Program and Membership Liaison Assistant:

Kesang Yuden

Professional Practice Lead:

Ruth Wojtiuk

Digital Specialist:

Lori Washington

Language Specialists

Cara Malla

Deborah LeBaron

STARS Case Managers

Abigail Lim, LIPHA Lead

Bessie Nasiopoulos, Professional Development Lead

Cherry Chan

Ganiat Animashaun

Gilda Gomez, Client Engagement Lead

Maninder Khutan

Holly Best

Ismail El Assaad

Lourdes Vicente, Mentoring Program Lead

Luciana Lima

Natolina Marius-Springer

Tamsheela Rashid, Social Media Lead

PASS Staff

PASS Program Manager:

Meghan Wankel

Program Coordinator/Technology Lead:

Mehrzad (Nicholas) Ghadiri

Case Manager/Communications Lead:

Tina Novotny

Marketing and Promotions Officer:

Mark Piercey

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Phil Schalm (Chairperson)

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Venkata Marella (Treasurer)

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Dr. Elaine Santa Mina

(Joan Lesmond IEN of the Year

Awards Committee Chair)

Ella Ferris

Sean McGrady

Dr. Emilene Reisdorf

John R. Vespa

Dr. Gwen Williams

Advisory Committee

Community Organizations

Immigrants Working Centre

Kingston Employment and Youth Services

WoodGreen

Employers

Pioneer Elder Care Inc.

Unity Health Toronto

University of Windsor

William Osler Health System

Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care

Academic Institutions

McMaster University

Sheridan College

University of Windsor

Regulatory Body

College of Nurses of Ontario

Employer Mentoring Partners

Access Alliance Community Health Centre

AgeCare - Cawthra Gardens LTC

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 Healthcare – Hamilton

St. Joseph's Healthcare – London

Sunnybrook Health Sciences Center (SBHS)

The Hospital for Sick Children

Trillium Health Partners

Unity Health Toronto

University Health Network

Victoria Order of Nurses (VON)

Women's College Hospital

Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care

Association Mentoring Partners

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)

The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO)

WeRPN (The Registered Practical Nurses Association of Ontario)



Supporting Nurses Back into Practice

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CARE Centre is a registered charity
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Visit www.canadahelps.org to make a donation

London/Windsor

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St. Catharines Office

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