



# International Family Nursing Association

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Message from the President, Dr. Marcia Van Riper

I am honored to be the first president of the International Family Nursing Association (IFNA). For those of you I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet, let me introduce myself. I was born and raised in Dodgeville, a small town in Wisconsin, USA. Being the third child in a family of 7 children (6 girls and 1 boy), I recognized the value and importance of family very early in life. I first became interested in family nursing in the 1970's when I was an undergraduate nursing student. Since then, I have done family nursing in a variety of settings (a maternity unit, a pediatric unit, a camp for girls, and a camp for individuals with developmental disabilities). I have also taught a number of family nursing courses. Moreover, I include a family focus in whatever courses I teach and whatever research I conduct. Currently I am an Associate Professor and the Chair of the Family Health Division in the School of Nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I have a joint appointment in the Carolina Center for Genome Sciences. The primary focus of my program of research is the family experience of being tested for and living with a genetic condition, with special emphasis on families of children with Down syndrome. Some of the best experiences of my career are the experiences I have had while attending International Family Nursing Conferences throughout the world.

I am looking forward to working with our international Board and membership to advance family nursing research, education, and practice. Currently IFNA has 97 members, representing 18 countries. We build on a strong foundation and rich heritage of accomplishments and progress toward incorporating a family lens into our scholarship, curricula, and practice. Still, there is much to be done to achieve our ultimate goal of promoting the care of families in health and illness.

The newly elected board includes a group of leaders in family nursing from around the world, Kobe, Japan – Reykjavik, Iceland – US – Canada. Our backgrounds and family interests reflect the diversity of family nursing. Our goal is to bring our collective expertise and commitment to family nursing to furthering the aims of IFNA. The Board already has met a number of times via conference calls. Our discussions have been lively and enthusiastic as we discuss possibilities and next steps for IFNA. Our immediate goals for IFNA include:

- Working to develop all avenues for communication with and between members – especially highlighting electronic options
- Developing a strategic plan and needs assessment for the organization
- Exploring possible options for group rates for existing family nursing organizations
- Working to establish a sustainability plan for the organization.
- Cultivating an ongoing relationship between IFNA and the Glen Taylor Nursing Institute for Family and Society

To those of you who already have joined IFNA, we extend our thanks. Our membership is our greatest resource! We are eager to hear from you about how best to meet your needs and we look forward to working together to achieve our shared goals. We ask that you encourage your family nursing colleagues to get involved and join IFNA. Over the next few weeks, we will be developing a survey to conduct a needs assessment of our organization. Given that this is an international organization and we want to use our financial resources wisely, we will be utilizing emails and email messaging (via Constant Contact) to disseminate information about the organization.

For those of you who have yet to join, we encourage you to do so. Information on joining IFNA can be found on this website ([www.internationalfamilynursing.org](http://www.internationalfamilynursing.org)). IFNA offers two categories of membership -

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Founding (\$250/year) and Active (\$100/year). Founding members will be recognized for their support on the website and in other IFNA materials.

If you have questions or feedback, please do not hesitate to contact the administrative office at [debbie@internationalfamilynursing.org](mailto:debbie@internationalfamilynursing.org). You may also contact me directly at [vanriper@email.unc.edu](mailto:vanriper@email.unc.edu). I look forward to getting to know you.

Those of you who enjoy watching or playing ice hockey, have probably heard the famous quote, “It’s a great day for hockey!” attributed to the well known hockey coach “Badger” Bob Johnson.

I suggest that we modify the quote slightly to say,

*Every day is a great day for family nursing!*

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