Excellence in Family Nursing Award 2021

Nominee: Dr. Lorraine M. Wright

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit the nomination of my colleague Dr. Lorraine M. Wright for the International Family Nursing Association *Excellence in Family Nursing Award 2021*. Dr. Wright is a Professor Emeritus of Nursing, University of Calgary, Calgary, Canada. She is also an international speaker, author/blogger, and consultant in family nursing. Her sustained, outstanding, and internationally renowned contributions to advance family nursing are indisputable. Through her exceptional achievements, she has transformed family nursing by substantially advancing the theory, practice, research, and education in this field. Thanks to her vision, her exceptional leadership, as well as her remarkable ability to transfer theoretical knowledge to clinical practice, Dr. Wright has promoted the advancement of knowledge in family nursing care and thereby has extended the boundaries of nursing practice in Canada and around the world.

A distinguished nurse, researcher, and great communicator, Dr. Wright made her mark in nursing science by leading, in particular, the development of four theoretical models: the “Calgary Family Assessment Model”, the “Calgary Family Intervention Model”, the "Illness Beliefs Model", and the "Trinity Model". Drawing inspiration from schools of thought in nursing as well as theories from related disciplines, Dr. Wright's work has truly transformed the nursing "care" of families dealing with health problems. To my knowledge, Dr. Wright became the first nurse to integrate a post-modern vision into her theoretical models and in her clinical practice. It is precisely this contribution of Dr. Wright that remains a turning point in the history of family nursing.

In 1984, Dr. Wright co-authored with Dr. Maureen Leahey, one of the first family nursing textbooks entitled, *“Nurses and Families: A Guide to Family Assessment and Intervention”* in which they presented their clinical practice models the “Calgary Family Assessment and Intervention Models”. For over 36 years, these two models have served as the foundation of many academic curricula, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. They have been used in over 26 countries by educators and health care professionals and cited (45,100 citations, Google Scholar) in hundreds of journal articles and books around the world. The evolution of these models led to seven editions of their textbook which held the honor of being among the three most adopted family nursing textbooks in North America for over 35 years. To date, over 150,000 copies of this textbook have been sold as it is required reading around the world in many schools of nursing, social work, and psychology. This textbook is currently available in eight languages.

In terms of research, Dr. Wright's activities center around studying the "process of therapeutic change" of family nursing interventions. This field of interest, still under explored despite its extreme relevance, has required innovative research approaches to demystify and better understand this "black box" in the relationship between nurses and families. It is from the results of this research that Dr. Wright and her colleagues, Dr. Wendy Watson and Dr. Janice Bell, developed the “Illness Beliefs Model” to guide advanced Family Systems Nursing practice. Their work is published in their book entitled, *Beliefs and Illness: A Model for Healing*, of which a third edition is in progress. In addition to the development of the “Illness Beliefs Model”, Dr. Wright’s clinical practice and research has created a conceptual framework that allows for a better understanding of the interplay between beliefs, suffering, and spirituality. This model, which she named the “Trinity Model” was the subject of her book, *Suffering and Spirituality: The Path to Illness Healing* (2nd edition, 2017). The relevance of this subject is illustrated by the growing number of researchers, educators, and clinicians in the humanities and health sciences who are interested in the link(s) that exist between spirituality and health.

With the aim of facilitating the transfer of knowledge of the practice of nursing to the family, Dr. Wright founded the Family Nursing Unit (FNU) in 1982, within the Faculty of Nursing, University of Calgary, of which she was the director until 2002. It was in this clinic that Dr. Wright developed an educational strategy enabling over 140 graduate nursing students develop their family assessment and intervention skills. These students conducted therapeutic interviews with families who presented with a health problem and live supervision for every interview was provided by their professors specializing in this family systems approach. Dr. Wright also demonstrated her own clinical scholarship by interviewing families for graduate students to observe her clinical skills. This innovative idea for the education of nurses in Family Systems Nursing captured the interest of over 250 nurses and other health professionals from Canada and foreign countries who visited the FNU to learn and observe the teaching and research of this clinical approach. The FNU served as a model for similar family nursing practice units in other faculties of nursing in Canada and abroad.

Finally, within the FNU context, for 21 years, Dr. Wright and her colleague, Dr. Janice Bell offered a week of intensive educational immersion in their family systems approach. They have welcomed hundreds of nurses, including leaders in the field of family nursing from: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Japan, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States to their Family Nursing Externships. Their success with this type of externship education prevails as they continue to be invited, almost on a yearly basis, to offer this type of externship in other parts of Canada as well as Switzerland, Iceland, Denmark, Japan, and the United States. In each country, Dr Wright normally offers a demonstration interview with a local family for participants to directly observe her clinical family nursing skills.

In 1988, Dr. Wright organized the first International Family Nursing Conference in Calgary, Canada. It is thanks to her vision and international influence that the family nursing community from many countries has come together for this important conference every two or three years. It was on the occasion of the 7th International Family Nursing Conference in 2005 in Victoria that Dr. Wright received a “Distinguished Contribution to Family Nursing Award” from the Journal of Family Nursing, Sage Publications for her exceptional contribution to the development of knowledge in family nursing and to the international network that continues to flourish in this area of ​​nursing. Moreover, her immense contributions to the advancement of knowledge about family intervention and family healing have been recognized by an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Montreal, Canada in May 2008 and by an Honorary Doctorate from Linnaeus University, Sweden, 2012. In 2020, she was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta.

Dr. Wright earned an international reputation for her important contribution to the development of family nursing. She has disseminated her work through 12 books, 21 book chapters, 10 educational DVD’s, and 91 articles in scientific journals. After offering over 300 presentations based on her practice -based research and research-based clinical practice in more than 40 countries, Dr. Wright continues to be frequently invited around the world to teach about how to best assist families suffering with serious illness and promote family healing. By nominating Dr. Wright for this *IFNA* *Award,* we wish to honor a pioneer, visionary clinician, professor, author, researcher, and consultant whose outstanding work in family nursing is recognized for its rigor, creativity, and transferability to nursing practice. In short, Dr. Wright is a leading authority and distinguished figure whose remarkable and indelible contributions to the advancement of knowledge and practice in family nursing has influenced the growth of family nursing around the world.

Fabie Duhamel, Ph.D.