



1990



STORIES



AUDIO



ICN TODAY



A nurse hugs an AIDS Patient (Credit: WHO)

ICN and AIDS

In 1990, ICN received WHO support for an AIDS projects in Africa to mobilise national nurses associations in eight African countries in their efforts to prevent the spread of HIV, to improve the care provided to AIDS patients and to support their families. This project was intended to complement national AIDS programme initiatives by reaching nursing personnel who were often unrecognised as channels of communication and care givers. The objective of the project was to increase the capability and effectiveness of the eight African Nurses Associations in participating in interdisciplinary and governmental HIV/AIDS programmes.

This project was undertaken initially through a series of workshops that were intended to “train the trainers” to implement education sessions. These sessions were designed to ensure that well informed groups of nurses would lead and assist other health care workers in preventing the spread of the disease and in providing safe care to those ill with AIDS. Joan McNeil, formerly with the Canadian Nurses Association, coordinated the project along with WHO and ICN from her base in Africa. Helga Morrow, ICN Adviser, directed the project in Geneva and statistical support was provided by William Holzemer, University of California. The NGO AIDS Consortium for the Third World carried out a survey to investigate funding European opportunities for nongovernmental organisations in developing countries that were engaged in HIV/AIDS related work.

The 1990s had been declared the UN Decade for HIV/AIDS. ICN’s activities during the decade related to HIV/AIDS, the deprived and Hepatitis B. In May 1990, the Ghana Registered Nurses Association hosted ICN’s first international workshop on AIDS prevention and care. 20 nurses selected by the national nurses associations in Ghana and Uganda participated in the two-week event. Joan MacNeill, ICN/AIDS project coordinator, reported on the tragic consequences for and concerns of those who had AIDS or were HIV positive, as highlighted by the presence of one such person who told her story. Participants were determined to become strong nursing voices in relation to HIV/AIDS. (ICN 1990)

Following on from the Accra workshop, on 1 December 1994, World AIDS Day ‘*AIDS and the Family*’ took place. Nurses were urged to observe World AIDS Day to commemorate the work of nurses worldwide who were working in HIV/AIDS control and prevention and who supported care for people and their families, focusing on how families were affected by AIDS.

Subsequently, the ICN Task Force on HIV/AIDS Work Risks was set up in 1995 to highlight the disturbingly high incidence and non-reporting of needle stick injuries and other exposures to HIV/AIDS by health care workers. ICN alerted health care management to the need for more protective measures, policies and equipment for workers. A new dimension was the then unseen occupational risks of the spread of Tuberculosis infections in HIV/AIDS infected persons. Measures recommended to reduce the high incidence of needle stick/sharps injury were discussed. (ICN 1995a)

The ICN Statement on *Impact of HIV/AIDS*, based on a three-day consultation by a Task Force comprised of experienced nurses selected by their national nurses associations, highlighted this growing worldwide public health problem. Its manifestations had become more complex in relation to protection, prevention and care for the millions of nursing and midwifery personnel working with and caring for HIV-positive people. In many countries, nurses constituted the majority of HIV/AIDS health care providers. The emergence of Tuberculosis and Hepatitis B had increased the potential for occupational exposure to nurses and midwives and this necessitated more extensive understanding and universal precautions, which were scarce in many countries. ICN recommended more studies in this area. (ICN 1995b)

ICN (1990) First workshop on AIDS prevention and care took place in Ghana *International Nursing Review* 37(4) 1990:287-89

ICN (1995a) Task Force on HIV/AIDS Work Risks’ *International Nursing Review* 42(5):132

ICN (1995b) ICN Statement on ‘Impact of HIV/AIDS’ *International Nursing Review* 42(6):169

International Nurses Day: Nurses and the Environment

The 1990 International Nurses Day was a campaign to save the environment. Millions of nurses worldwide joined together to ‘Save the Earth.’ Tree-planting ceremonies and education seminars were most favoured. ICN produced press kits in English, Spanish and French and the Hellenic National Graduate Nurses Association translated the material into Greek. For the 1990 campaign, ICN was assisted by the Centre for Our Common Future, UNICEF, UNEP and WHO. The Zaire Nurses Association’s workshop was presided over by the Governor of Kinshasa. Trinidad and Tobago Registered Nurses Association focused on *Environment Health is Everybody’s Business*. In New Zealand, nurses at Christchurch and Tuarua hospitals celebrated International Nurses Day with tree planting ceremonies, while in Wellington, the Executive Director of the New Zealand Nurses Association spoke on how nurses could become strong advocates for a healthy earth. (ICN 1990)

ICN (1990). “International Nurses Day” (*International Nursing Review* 37(5) 1990 :319

Beggs et al. (2019). “The 2019 report of the MJA – Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: a turbulent year with mixed progress”. *The Lancet*.



Nurses play a key role in health research

Research Development and Capability

In May 1990, ICN and WHO planned health research strategies when a special task force was set up to prepare for the 43rd World Health Assembly, which was focused on giving health research a greater role in WHO’s Health-for-All-strategy. ICN Executive Director, Constance Holleran, and the chairperson of the National Centre for Nursing Research (NCNR) were the instigators of the research. Participants were selected based on their expertise in research and geographical location.

A review of ICN’s special role in supporting research was presented by Taka Oguisso in her introductory speech to the Task Force on International Research during their meeting in May 1990, supporting the ICN’s First Constitution promise. She first identified that ICN had continually worked to influence national and international health policies and then outlined ICN’s priorities for the coming years. These priorities included having more effective participation in policy making and health care delivery through working with national nurses associations in encouraging and facilitating the development of research in nursing by nurses. Dissemination of research findings was also a priority for ICN.

The Task Force on International Research identified specific needs, priorities and strategies for action by national nurses associations in the six geographical regions represented. Many similarities were identified including the university as the source of research development; poor dissemination of findings and detachment of research from practice. Divergences were evident when comparing the research priorities and the progress made by developing countries. The Task Force’s recommendation for all of these areas and ICN’s future role were included in the final report, which was reviewed by ICN Board of Directors, in October 1990. But challenges facing researchers remained and required new strategic initiatives and collaboration with external organisations in the years ahead.



World Health Organization

ICN and WHO: Strengthening of the role of nursing

In January 1992, the ICN Statement to the WHO Directive commented on the report of the implementation of the 1989 WHA Resolution 42:27 on *Strengthening of the role of nursing and midwifery personnel in support of the strategy for health for all*.

ICN spoke of nursing as an essential health service and not as a developing profession. The view of ICN was that there was a much stronger need for nursing and midwifery within WHO in order to assist in the development of a strong and effective nursing component within the health services of every country. The ICN statement went on to say that in the 45th year of WHO there was not firm data available on nursing needs and resources in most countries, even though this data was available for physicians. ICN also noted that nurses did not participate in health costs discussion or on training programmes that developed managers even though nursing costs were a major factor in every health care budget. It was evident there were few nurse managers in WHO and there were no nurses in major units of WHO organisation. ICN spoke of the changing needs of communities in central and Eastern Europe and of parts of South East Asia and Africa where along with the AIDS pandemic all have greatly increased need for expert WHO nursing assistance. ICN hoped that commitment to nurses would be reinforced by WHO through more active recruitment programmes, promotions and adequate budget for essential programmes that nurses were involved in. (ICN 1992)

It was noted in the 1994, that ‘WHO wished to make special efforts to increase the proportion of women in the professional and higher-grade posts, and to this end the Division of Personnel wished to expand its roster of qualified professional woman candidates.’ Public health nurses, nurse educators, and maternal and child health specialists were mentioned in the medical professional category. (ICN 1994)

In 1995, ICN urged the WHO Executive Board to include nurses as members of its Board. ICN deputy Executive Director, Taka Oguisso, told WHO that it was overlooking nurses and midwives in its fellowship programme. WHO was not working closely enough with the ILO, particularly to endorse Recommendation 157, and Convention 149 on nursing and was omitting nurses and midwives and community health workers in its latest report on primary health care.

In a further move in May 1996, a record number of 60 nurses attended the 49th World Health Assembly in Geneva. The Resolution and its two crucial amendments to strengthen nursing and midwifery programmes were overwhelmingly supported by 42 countries, with delegates voicing nursing’s indispensable contributions to their national health programmes. The amendments called for greater involvement of nurses in the reform process at all levels and in development of national health policies. With these amendments the Global Advisory Group could now focus on the priority issues to enable nursing’s maximum contribution to global health goals and WHO’s Programme of Work. ICN President Margretta Madden Styles ([read more](#)) said ‘we will have six years of data documenting nursing’s value to world health’ (pg. 97).

An important event took place in January 1995 with the Exhibition to nurses that took place in the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Museum in Geneva. This Exhibition paid tribute to nurses through images reflecting their motivations and public impressions during this century’s first 30 years. ICN was represented by Board Member Cecile Fontaine. The Swiss National Nurses Associations supported the Exhibition which was held under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, ICN and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

ICN News (1995) Exhibition and Tribute to Nurses at International Red Cross *International Nursing Review* 42(2):35

ICN (1992) Statement to the WHO Directive on strengthening of the role of nursing *International Nursing Review*.39(2):36

ICN (1994) ICN/ WHO wishes to make special efforts to increase the proportion of women *International Nursing Review* 41(1):11

Margretta (Gretta) Madden Styles

Margretta (Gretta) Madden Styles (1930-2005) earned her Bachelor of Science degree in biology and chemistry at Juniata College; her Master of Nursing degree at Yale University; and her doctorate in education at the University of Florida. She was past president of the American Nurses Association (ANA), the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), and the International Council of Nurses (ICN). Dr. Styles' career was spent in academic nursing, in associate degree, baccalaureate, and higher degree programmes. She served as professor and dean of the schools of nursing at the University of California, San Francisco; Wayne State University; and the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at San Antonio.

Dr. Styles was recognized worldwide for her special expertise in professional issues, particularly regulation and credentialing. In the international arena, within her area of expertise, she directed the 1983 ICN worldwide project on the regulation of the profession. As Chairperson of the ICN Professional Services Committee, Dr. Styles co-authored the international guidelines on the designation of nursing specialties and the regulation of nurse specialists. As a consultant for ICN, she completed in 1997 a feasibility study on *The Role of ICN in Credentialing: Answering the Global Need for Quality Assurance*.

She was an elected fellow of the American Academy of Nursing, the Institute of Medicine, and the Royal College of Nursing of the United Kingdom. She was the author of five books and numerous articles published in journals here and in other countries. She received from ICN the Christiane Reimann Prize for international leadership in nursing in Taiwan in May 2005.



Margretta (Gretta) Madden Styles



1990



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ICN TODAY



ICN TODAY

International Nurses Day: Nurses and the Environment

(see story for background)

Climate change today poses the single biggest health risk to humanity with devastating damage to people's health and livelihoods if urgent action is not taken.

In 2018, ICN released a position statement on [Nurses, climate change and health](#) which discussed the impact of climate change on health and the key role of nurses in the mitigation of climate change and the support to people and communities around the world to adapt to its impacts.

In 2019, we called on governments to take immediate action to tackle climate change, after the latest Lancet [report](#), *Countdown: Tracking Progress on Health and Climate Change*, revealed impending health crisis for future generations.

Research Development and Capability

(see story for background)

Nursing research continues to be a vital part of ICN's work to advocate for and advance the nursing profession globally. At the 2019 ICN Congress in Singapore, Dr Linda Aiken, a renowned nurse academic, presented her latest research findings which showed a link between the proportion of qualified nurses on wards and positive outcomes for patients.

ICN encourages nurses to undertake research and publish the results of their work. We offer opportunities for nurses to present their work at our international Congresses and regional conferences, and to publish in our journal, the [International Nursing Review](#).

ICN and WHO: Strengthening of the Role of Nursing

(see story for background)

Making up approximately half of the health workforce, nurses are intrinsically linked to the ability of countries to address health priorities and achieve universal health coverage – daily, nurses are advocating for Health for All and often in the most challenging circumstances with limited resources.

ICN played a key part in the development and implementation of the Global Strategic Directions for Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2016-2020 and we are co-Chair of the first-ever State of the World's Nursing Report which will be launched in 2020.

In May 2019, the World Health Assembly agreed to designate 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and the Midwife. Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO) praised ICN's contribution, saying:

'I would like to thank the International Council of Nurses and the Nursing Now campaign for raising the status and profile of nurses and am proud to contribute to the recognition of their work.'





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ICN
TODAY



African AIDS Project



African AIDS Project

In 1990, ICN received World Health Organization support for an AIDS projects in Africa. This project was intended to complement national AIDS programmes, helping to mobilise national nurses associations in eight African countries in their efforts to prevent the spread of HIV, to improve the care provided to AIDS' patients and to support their families. The project began with a series of workshops that were intended to ensure that well-informed groups of nurses could lead and assist other health care workers in preventing the spread of the disease and in providing safe-care to those with AIDS. The 1990s had been declared the UN Decade for HIV/AIDS. The ICN's activities during the decade related to HIV/AIDS, the deprived and Hepatitis B. In 1990, the Ghana Registered Nurses Association hosted the ICN's first international workshop in Accra. December 1st 1994 was declared World AIDS Day. Nurses were urged to commemorate the work of nurses worldwide who were working in HIV/AIDS control and prevention and who supported patients and their families. The ICN 'Task Force on HIV/AIDS Work Risks' was set up in 1995 to highlight the disturbingly high incidence and non-reporting of needle stick injuries and other exposures to HIV/AIDS by health care workers. A new dimension was the then unseen occupational risks of the spread of Tuberculosis infections in HIV/AIDS infected persons. The ICN Statement on Impact of HIV/AIDS highlighted this growing worldwide public health problem. (Image: A world map highlighting the numbers of adults infected with HIV, issued by the World Health Organization (WHO). Colour lithograph, 1994. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC BY-NC)





1991



STORY



ICN
TODAY



Mental health was the theme for International Nurses Day 1991

International Nurses Day: Mental Health – Nurses in Action

The 1991 ICN International Nurses Day, held on 12 May, focused on Mental Health. Better care for the mentally ill and effective programmes to promote mental health was the theme for Nurses Day around the world. This was supported by the '*Mental Health-Nurses in Action kit*'. The New Zealand National Nurses Association, supported by the Department of Health organised seminars to facilitate the formation of networks between senior mental health nurses. The Canadian National Nurses Association presented a discussion paper titled '*Mental Health Care Reform: A priority for Nurses*'. Other countries national nurses associations presented seminars. (ICN 1991a) During the year, ICN supported nurses in promoting mental health programmes by developing guidelines for mental health. An eight-member Task Force handpicked by their national nurses associations for their expertise in the area, met in ICN headquarters, Geneva from 19-21 August to provide guidelines for the education of mental health/psychiatric nurses. The aim was to improve services and to provide guidance to ICN and national nurses associations in this clinical area. The group was chaired by Hiroko Minami of Japan. The experts compared trends, examined strategies and agreed on recommendation for education, research and practice standards. Their view was that consideration should be given to the inclusion of mental health components in the basic nursing curriculum and in primary health programmes. (ICN 1991b)

ICN (1991a) '*Mental Health Care Reform: A priority for Nurses*' *International Nursing Review* 38 (6)159-160

ICN (1991b) 8-member Task Force discuss mental health (1991) *International Nursing Review* 38(5) 127





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STORY



ICN TODAY



ICN TODAY

International Nurses Day: Mental Health – Nurses in Action

(see story for background)

WHO estimates that nearly two-thirds of people with a known mental health condition never seek help from a health professional. Stigma, discrimination and neglect prevent care and treatment from reaching people with mental disorders. ICN is concerned about the lack of recognition of the health workforce role in the care, advocacy and leadership in dealing with mental health. ICN is also concerned about the absence of consumers and the community in the development of policies, strategies or legislation related to mental health. People centred care and community engagement need to be front and centre in any implementation plans.

In 2019, ICN attended the [World Health Organization's Mental Health Forum](#), which provided an opportunity for diverse stakeholders to discuss progress on WHO's Mental Health Action Plan in countries and to exchange information on the implementation of the Plan. The theme for the 2019 Mental Health Forum was "Enhancing Country Action on Mental Health", reflecting the vision of [WHO's 13th General Programme of Work, 2019-2023](#). The [WHO Special Initiative for Mental Health \(2019-2023\): Universal Health Coverage for Mental Health](#) was presented and conceived to strategically advance policies, advocacy and human rights, and scale-up quality interventions and services for people with mental health conditions, including substance use and neurological disorders.





1992



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ICN
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Healthy Ageing was the focus of International Nurses Day in 1992

International Nurses Day: Healthy Ageing

The 1992 ICN International Nurses Day focused on Healthy Ageing. National nurses associations from around the world took part and many of the association's journals devoted an entire journal to the subject, some translated into different languages, including Arabic, Japanese and Danish. Many clinics were held on health topics such as diabetes and hypertension and health fairs and seminars on caring for the elderly were presented. The topic generated hundreds of requests for the ICN kit and poster. (ICN 1992)

ICN (1992) Nurses Day and Health Aging *International Nursing Review* 39(6)163

Kingma M. (1999) ICN *Nursing Matters* on healthy ageing: A public health and nursing challenge *International Nursing Review* 46(2)60-1

Guidelines on Specialisation in Nursing

At its November 1991 meeting in Geneva, ICN's Board of Directors under its President Mo-Im Kim approved a series of ICN projects and several resolutions. Due to the Board's concern about changing work environments for nurses it approved the publication of the ICN guidelines on *Specialisation in Nursing*. This document was designed to avoid fragmentation of nursing care and a splintering of the profession through inaction.

The guidelines recommended four essentials for the orderly development of specialisation: systematic means of designating nursing specialities; minimum standards; regulatory mechanisms and deliberate nursing resource planning. The Board did not advocate that every country necessarily needed to take the speciality route. A new definition of nurse specialist was also proposed. The Board also gave its approval for continuing exploratory work on the feasibility of developing an *International Classification System* of nursing practice. (ICN 1992) Two other guidelines received Board approval: *Roles of the national nurses associations in the Protection of Children* and *Continuing Education Guidelines* for national nurses associations.

ICN (1992) Guidelines on Specialisation in Nursing came to the fore in 1992. *International Nursing Review* 39(3)67





1992



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ICN TODAY



ICN TODAY

International Nurses Day: Healthy Ageing (see story for background)

According to the World Health Organization, there will be 1 billion people over 60 years of age in the world by 2020 and this number is projected to double to 2 billion by 2050. As the global population ages, there is a need to expand access to quality care so that people can live better as they live longer. Nursing plays a vital role in improving and maintaining the health of the older person. To foster attitudes, knowledge, and skills, maximize the functional ability of ageing populations, and support age-friendly supportive environments and public health policies, we must ensure the presence of an adequately skilled nursing workforce.

ICN has intervened at the World Health Assembly to ensure that the WHO Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Ageing and Health included issues of mental health and disability. ICN believes that a strong primary health care system is key to improving the health and wellbeing of older people. We called on governments to remove regulatory barriers in order for nurses to carry out their role in preventing, identifying and treating age-related illnesses, thereby facilitating the shift to primary health care.





1993



STORY



AUDIO



ICN Congress - Madrid (left: Dr Pilar Fernandez-Fernandez, right: Mª Teresa Monzón Casas)

20th ICN Quadrennial Congress, Madrid 1993

An estimated 9,000 to 10,000 nurses from 100 countries attended the 20th Congress in Madrid from 20-25 June. Kirsten Stallknecht, Nordic nurse leader and a member of the Danish Nurses Association, committed to international nursing issues when presenting the keynote address which focused on the Congress theme *Unity for Quality*. Plenary sessions included *Quality through Management* presented by Christine Hancock (United Kingdom) and Joyce C. Kadandara (Zimbabwe); *Quality through the Workplace* with presentations by Inger Ohlsson (Sweden) and Noriko Katada (Japan) and *Quality through Health Policy* presented by Yi-Mei Chao (Taiwan) and Alice Baumgart (Canada).

The ICN Council of National Representatives (CNR) met just prior to Congress and, for the first time, held an Open Forum Discussion. CNR adopted the 1994-1999 Strategic Plan which underlined ICN's mission to 'develop and promote nursing's special contribution to society with respect to health and quality of life'. The newly elected President, Margaretta Madden-Styles ([read more](#)), whose watchword was "March", spoke of the challenge facing nurses in 'marching' toward progress through her vision for nurses to advance to higher levels of practice and leadership on a worldwide basis. (Styles 1993).

Some 400 students from 17 countries met at the fifth ICN Student Assembly during the Congress. Students expressed concerns on diminishing employment opportunities in developed countries, inadequate funding for nursing education and the need for baccalaureate education as preparation for nursing practice for the future.

Styles M (1993) Marching toward progress *International Nursing Review* ;40(4):111-6





1993



STORY



AUDIO



20th ICN Quadrennial Congress, Madrid, Spain

– Margretta Madden Styles, ICN President, 1993-1997



Margretta Madden Styles, ICN President, 1993-1997

We have nourished our minds and hearts and bodies with the sustenance of deliberation and debate, camaraderie and hospitality within this unique atmosphere of the 20th ICN Congress in Madrid. My vision for nurses is for them to advance to higher levels of practice and leadership on a worldwide basis. This vision includes greater recognition for nursing as well as strength through unity. This progress will result from the strength, history, endurance, and the pursuit of quality health care for which nursing is recognised. (Image: Margretta Madden Styles)





1994



STORY



International Classification for Nursing Practice (ICNP)

In 1994, nurses in an advisory meeting, sponsored by ICN and funded by the US Kellogg Foundation, nurses from 13 countries met in Tlaxcala, Mexico to explore the process of developing terms to describe community-based and primary health care nursing activities that could be incorporated into a nursing language and the International Classification of Nursing practice (ICNP).¹ ICN took the ICNP project further in moving it into a new phase, when after a weeklong workshop in Geneva, ICNP consultants and technical advisors began a first draft on an ICNP, based on feedback and wide consultation and then prepared guidelines for submitting labels by nurses and nursing groups.²

¹ICN News (1996) Introducing ICN's International Classification for Nursing Practice (ICNP): a unifying framework. *International Nursing Review* Nov/Dec; 43(6): 169-170.

²ICN News (1994) International Classification for Nursing Practice *International Nursing Review* 41(6) 164





1995



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ICN
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Women's Health

The 1995 International Nurses Day theme was **Focus on Women's Health**. The ICN kit entitled *Women's Health: Nurses Pave the Way* spanned women's issues from birth to death, stating it was evident that the education and equality of women was needed to solve most of the issues contributing to their ill health. The document highlighted the need for integrated health services for women and asked for more integrated maternal and child health programmes. In 1999, on their centennial, ICN looked back on its role in Women's Health from the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* to the *Recognition of Women's Health Rights* and had outlined the critical steps along that journey. This review was included in the Fourth World Conference for Women and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, which signatories were legally bound to adhere to.





1995



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ICN TODAY

Women's Health

(see story for background)

ICN promotes gender equity, education and empowerment of women in both public and private life; and supports fundamental social reforms to address the inequalities in power, status and roles. We endorse a gender mainstreaming approach in all aspects of health.

In April 2018, ICN signed an agreement with Women Deliver to join the Deliver for Good campaign as an ally organisation. Deliver for Good is a global campaign that applies a gender lens to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promotes 12 critical investments in girls and women to power progress for all

In 2018, we joined the Women Deliver Call to Action to Prioritise Diabetes in Pregnancy to Save Lives, Improve Maternal Health, and Curb Intergenerational Transmission of NCDs. Diabetes in pregnancy is an under-recognised, under-prioritised health issue with significant implications for women, newborns, and children throughout their lives.

In 2019, ICN took part in the Women Deliver conference in Vancouver Canada where we held a Policy Forum, co-hosted by the Canadian Nurses Association, on the links among power, nursing and advocacy, and on identifying solutions that can help to helping nurses mobilise and improve the health, well-being and rights of girls and women. With a workforce dominated by women globally, nurses may experience gender inequality at individual, organizational and structural levels. Nurses must be supported to develop knowledge, personal power and strategies to deliver on the promise of effective advocacy from points of care to the development of policy at country and international levels.

ICN attended the UN 62nd Commission on the Status of Women – Empowering Rural Women and Girls, including a range of sessions focused on: ending violence against women and girls; the use of technology in improving the health of rural women and girls

with a focus on NCDs; achieving the SDGs; investing in rural health workers; women in the media; and eliminating female genital mutilation.

In partnership with the World Health Professions Alliance, ICN made a intervention at the 72nd World Health Assembly on the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health (2016-2030) urging Members States to invest in and support the healthcare workforce, of which the majority are women.





1997



STORY



21st ICN Congress, Vancouver, Canada

Some 5.000 nurses from 120 countries gathered for the 21st ICN Congress, co-hosted by the Canadian Nurses Association. The focus of the Congress was *Sharing the Health Challenge*. The Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chrétien, extended his warmest greetings in writing that this prestigious event offered nurses and midwives the ideal forum in which to exchange ideas and discuss issues of mutual concern and to evaluate achievements. Greetings were also provided by Rachel Bard, President of the Canadian Nurses Association. During the Congress, nurses described how they were teaming up with other healthcare providers and building partnerships with other professionals. Areas covered included rationing of health care, ensuring quality care for patients, prevention of sexual violence and the important role of nurses in continuity of care, in restructured health systems, around the world. Keynote speaker, Gloria Smith, provided insight into how community-based approaches may be used to shape health systems structure and delivery in the future and she urged nurses to think differently. (ICN 1997)

Journalist Suzanne Gordon and radio broadcaster Diane Mason offered a course on media realities and strategies for making nursing a more viable profession. Professor June Clarke, United Kingdom, presented the first Virginia Henderson Memorial Lecture on *The Unique Function of the Nurse* saying that 'nursing would survive the technological explosion in health care because of nurses' unique skills.'

The CNR Governing Body had met prior to the Congress and discussed several constitutional amendments designed to increase ICN's flexibility and adaptability. The CNR also explored the principles and priorities that should guide ICN's decisions in forging linkages with other organisations. The CNR elected Kirsten Stallknecht ([read more](#)) from Denmark as President of ICN for the 1997-2001 quadrennium, and she selected the watchword "*Humanity*". ICN launched its new corporate identity logo at the Congress. The transition would be completed by its centennial in 1999 in London.

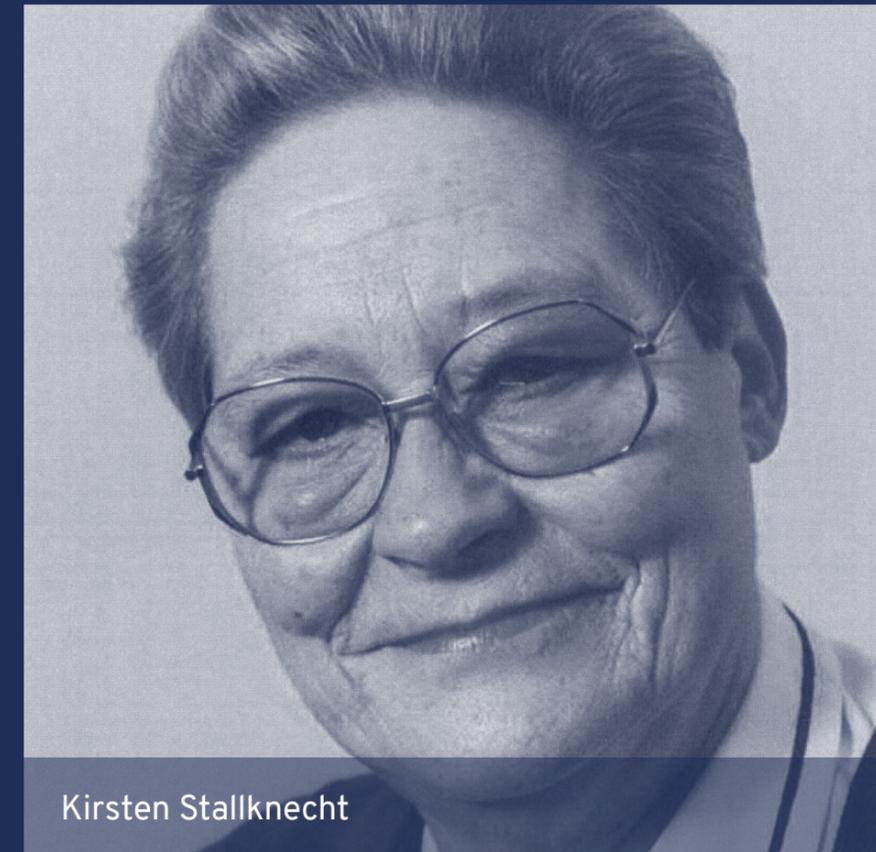
ICN (1997). Keynote speaker at the ICN 21st Quadrennial Congress in Vancouver, Gloria Smith, a former director of public health for the State of Michigan, USA, was responsible for developing the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's health programme in countries around the world. *International Nursing Review* (1997) 44(4)95





Kirsten Stallknecht

Kirsten Stallknecht (1937-) is a formidable force in nursing and public life, not only in her native Denmark but throughout Europe and internationally. Beginning her nursing career at age 18, she became president of the Danish Nurses' Organization (DNO) at age 30 and served in that position for 28 years (1968-96). She served as the 23rd president of the International Council of Nurses (ICN) from 1997 to 2001. She also served as president of the Nordic Nurses' Federation (1989-95) and president of the Standing Committee of the Nurses of the European Union (1991-95). Throughout her career Stallknecht has had great influence in bargaining for better work conditions for nurses. At ICN she led programmes to provide nurses around the world with negotiating skills. She initiated many programmes and partnerships to assist nursing associations hard hit by war, financial difficulties and catastrophes, and those in poorer countries.



Kirsten Stallknecht





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Christopher Reeve was Honorary Patron of ICN in 1999

ICN the Next Millennium

In 1999, ICN celebrated its centennial and prepared to move to the next millennium by joining nurses worldwide in celebrating 100 years of nurses caring and taking the profession into the next millennium. Renowned actor Christopher Reeve accepted to be Honorary Patron by joining ICN in championing nursing throughout 1999.

Christopher Reeve, a distinguished actor and director had been a quadriplegic since his catastrophic injury that occurred during an equestrian event in 1995. He was Chairman of the Board of the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation and Vice-Chairman of the National (US) Organisation on Disability. On his appointment as Honorary Patron for ICN he confirmed:

“I am pleased to serve as the Honorary Patron for ICN. Nurses have been essential in maintaining my health and preparing me for recovery. I am lucky to have an outstanding team of nurses without whom I could not live my daily life. “

A colourful highlight of ICN’s centennial inauguration held in Geneva was the fashion show of nursing uniforms from the past 100 years and all world regions. Worn by ICN staff and nursing students, the uniforms were of fine wool, cotton, taffeta, and silk materials, often complemented by elaborate hats, medals and other decorations signifying the uniform in nursing’s history. Many testimonies to the importance of nursing all over the world were presented during the centennial celebrations including from Gro Harlem Brundtland, Director General, WHO, who spoke of *public health workers standing strong by standing united and of nurses continuing to be there when they were needed, when people were suffering-and the vulnerable needed care and assistance.*

From 27 June to 1 July 1999, over 4,500 nurses from around the world gathered in London to celebrate 100 years of accomplishment. ICN returned to London, the city where it was founded 100 years ago to stage its Centennial Conference in the Royal Albert Hall. The Conference featured over 1,500 papers and presentations on issues ranging from human rights and children’s health to the impact of technology on nursing.

ICN President Kirsten Stalknecht in her opening address said that *‘100 years ago , a group of daring women were drawn together around a mere idea-a dream-that nursing could become a force for social progress, not only in their own societies, but from every society on earth’*. The President then presented an imaginary journey through the 21st century aided by technology advances on how technology and social changes had affected the role of nurses and nursing care.

ICN (1997). Keynote speaker at the ICN 21st Quadrennial Congress in Vancouver, Gloria Smith, a former director of public health for the State of Michigan, USA, was responsible for developing the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s health programme in countries around the world. *International Nursing Review* (1997) 44(4)95

ICN News (2000) Appointment of Christopher Reeve as Honorary Patron for ICN *International Nursing Review* 47(1) 5





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The Next Millennium

- Christopher Reeve, Actor and Activist



Christopher Reeve was Honorary Patron of ICN in 1999

Nurses have been pivotal to my own recovery and health. I know this is also true for millions around the world who are restored to health and comforted in illness by the caring, compassion and expertise of nurses. As Honorary Patron for the 100th birthday of the International Council of Nurses, I ask that we recognise the work of our nurses and thank them for their contribution in promoting good health in all of our communities. The ICN's centennial year celebrations aim to remind the world how in homes, work places, schools, hospitals, villages, refugee camps and many other settings, nurses promote the health and well-being of their communities, educate, tend to people in need, and search for new ways to improve the health of humanity.

