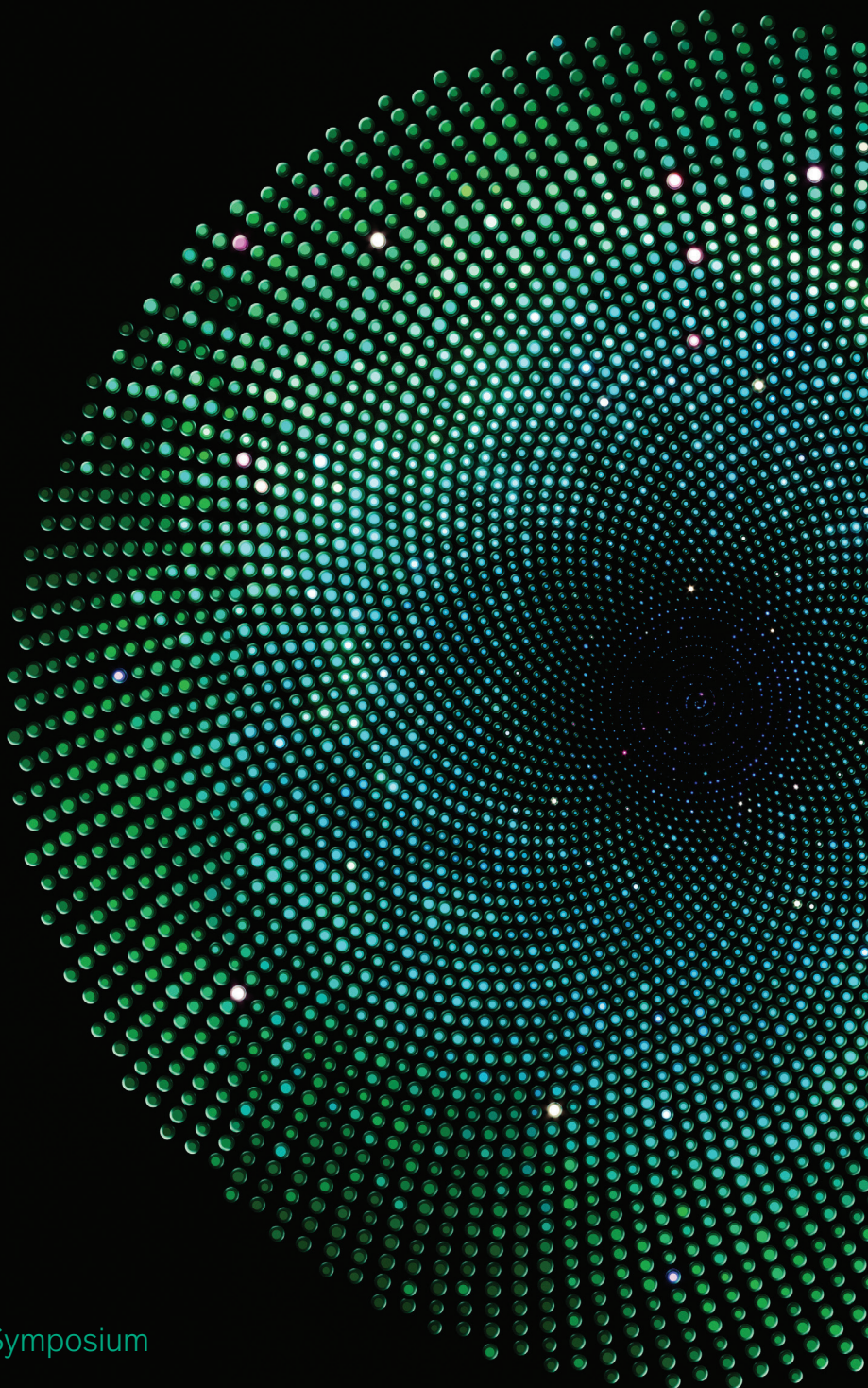


**We RPN**

Registered Practical Nurses  
Association of Ontario



WeRPN 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Research Symposium

# Shaping Practice and Innovation

FRIDAY NOV 29, 2024

# Agenda

<b>8:30am</b>	<b>Registration, Breakfast and Poster Setup</b>	
<b>9:00am</b>	<b>Welcome and Opening Address</b>	
	<b>Welcome</b> Annette Weeres, Chief of Nursing Practice and Research, WeRPN	
	<b>Opening Remarks</b> Dianne Martin, CEO, WeRPN	
	<b>Greetings from Humber</b> Sandra Filice, Associate Dean, Nursing and Personal Support Worker Programs, & Kristan Lingard, Acting Senior Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences & Wellness	
<b>9:30am</b>	<b>Keynote Panel: RPNs Shaping Practice &amp; Innovation</b>	
	<b>Victoria Pringle</b> , RPN Research Fellow, Toronto Metropolitan University	
	<b>Daniel Sparks</b> , Executive Sponsor, The Regional Municipality of Durham	
	<b>Dr. Lianne Jeffs</b> , Academic Mentor, Hennick Bridgepoint Hospital – Sinai Health System	
<b>10:30am</b>	<b>Coffee &amp; Networking Break</b>	
<b>10:45am</b>	<b>Oral Presentations: The Valued Role of RPNs</b>	<b>Interactive Sessions: Lessons from Home and Community Care: Applying the Evidences</b>
	<b>Optimizing the role of RPNs in the Operating Room</b> Dr. Sherry Espin, and Victoria Pringle, RPN, Toronto Metropolitan University	<b>Promoting Resilience in Home and Community Care: Building Forward</b> Dr. Kristin Prentice, Western University
	<b>The Role of Nurses in Inpatient Geriatric Rehabilitation Units: A Scoping Review</b> Dr. Nicole Guitar, Western University	<b>Building a Resilience Plan</b> Grace Felix, RPN, Professional Practice Associate, WeRPN
<b>11:45am</b>	<b>Lunch &amp; Networking Break</b>	
<b>12:30pm</b>	<b>Interactive Sessions: Explore &amp; Revitalize</b>	
	<b>Poster Presentations</b> See below for presenter details	
	<b>Tour Humber Nursing Labs</b> Sonia Deleo, Clinical Operations Specialist	
	<b>Strengthening your Well-being: Self Care Apps for Life and Practice</b> JP Munro, RPN, Professional Practice Association, WeRPN	

<p><b>1:30pm</b></p> <p><b>Oral Presentations:</b> <b>Leading Change for RPNs in Clinical Practice and Care Delivery</b></p> <p><b>Amplifying RPN Nurse Leadership: Emotional Support Practices in Home and Community Care</b> Sonia Nizzer, Research and Innovation Team, VHA Home HealthCare</p> <p><b>Development and Implementation of a Novel Nursing Shift Assignment Toolkit</b> Natalie Weiser, Research Coordinator, Unity Health Toronto</p>	<p><b>Interactive Session:</b> <b>Research for RPNs</b></p> <p><b>Co-Design for Virtual PIECES Care Planning in Long-term Care Homes: Implementation of a Functional Framework and Toolkit</b> Dr. Denise Connelly and Dr. Melissa Hay, Western University</p> <p><b>RPN Research Fellowship Experience, and Preparing a Research Fellowship Proposal</b> Sasha Smith, RPN and Dr. Nancy Snobelen, Research Consultant WeRPN</p>
<p><b>2:30pm</b></p> <p><b>Oral Presentations:</b> <b>Health Human Resource Planning</b></p> <p><b>Developing a Workplace Retention Framework in Long-term Care</b> Dr. Winnie Sun and Oghenefegor Uwejeaya, RPN/RN, Ontario Tech University</p> <p><b>A Leave of Absence Might Not be a Bad Thing: Registered Practical Nurses Working in Home Care During the COVID-19 Pandemic</b> Dr. Denise Connelly, Western University</p>	<p><b>Interactive Session:</b> <b>Workforce Retention and Professional Practice Development</b></p> <p><b>Strengthening the Impact of Scoping Review Findings Related to Retention and Psychological Health And Safety in Long-Term Care</b> Jen Calver, RPN, PhD Candidate, Ontario Tech University</p> <p><b>Bridging Education Program in Nursing – Professional Practice Development and Role Transition</b> Dr. Melissa Hay, Western University, and Jennifer McCauley, RPN, BEGIN Case Manager, WeRPN</p>

**3:30pm**

## Coffee and Wrap Up

**WeRPN Strategic Research Plan and Objectives:** Jen Calver, RPN, Research Coordinator, WeRPN

**Accessing WeRPN Research & Practice Resources:** Jennifer McCauley, RPN, WeRPN

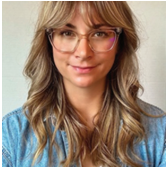
**Closing Remarks:** Annette Weeres, Chief of Nursing Practice and Research, WeRPN

## Poster Presentations

- ➊ **Sasha Smith, RPN:** Research Fellowship to Explore Nurse Resilience Interventions
- ➋ **Victoria Pringle, RPN:** Research Fellowship to Explore Optimizing the Role of the RPN in the Operating Room
- ➌ **Attila Kovacs, RPN:** Examining Virtual Self-Instructional Micro-Credential Learning for LTC Staff to Advance Expertise in Palliative Care for Persons with Dementia
- ➍ **Oghenefegor Uwejeaya, RPN:** Workforce Retention Framework in Long-term Care
- ➎ **Andrea Baumann, PhD student:** Study of GTA Hospital Nurses' Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic
- ➏ **Meaghan Adams, PT., PhD, Research Coordinator:** Using Virtual Reality to Identify and Mitigate Environmental Triggers of Responsive Behaviours in People Living with Dementia in Long-Term Care
- ➐ **Marilyn Oliver, RPN:** Empowering Nurses for Resilience in Home and Community Care: A path to Progress, WeRPN
- ➑ **Marilyn Oliver, RPN:** Cultural Competence, WeRPN
- ➒ **Kimberley Reid, RPN:** Let's BEGIN, WeRPN
- ➓ **Jennifer McCauley:** Bridging into New Nursing Roles, WeRPN



# Speakers



**Victoria Pringle,**  
Keynote Panel  
Speaker

Victoria, an RPN for 10 years, began her career on a surgical ward before earning a graduate certificate in Perioperative Nursing and transitioning to the operating room in 2016. She was the recipient of the 2023-2024 WeRPN RPN Research Fellowship.

## Presentation Highlights

- Experienced the evolution of the RPN role in the Operating Room, noting barriers to full scope of practice.
- Submitted a research proposal on RPN utilization in the OR for a call for WeRPN fellowship



**Daniel Sparks,**  
Keynote Panel  
Speaker

Daniel is a Research and Program Coordinator in the CAO's Office at the Regional Municipality of Durham. He is leading research, evaluation, and collaboration initiatives, including partnerships with local postsecondary institutions like Ontario Tech University.

## Presentation Highlights

- Facilitated projects engaging nursing students with the Long-Term Care and Services for Seniors Division.
- Experience as executive sponsor for an RPN Research Fellow.



**Lianne Jeffs,**  
Keynote Panel  
Speaker

Dr. Jeffs is the Chief Scientific Officer, Science of Care Institute, Research and Innovation Lead at Sinai Health. As a Senior Clinician Scientist with the Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute, her research focuses on person-centred care, organizational learning, and patient safety.

## Presentation Highlights

- An overview of how we are giving voice and agency by enhancing RPNs engagement in research and innovation at Sinai Health.
- Experience as a research mentor for an RPN research fellow

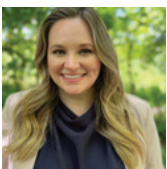


**Dr. Sherry Espin,**  
Optimizing the  
Role of RPNs in the  
Operating Room

Dr. Espin, RN, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Daphne Rockwell School of Nursing, specializing in professional practice, qualitative research, and leadership. Her research focuses on interprofessional education and collaboration, as well as safety, drawing from her perioperative nursing experience. She explores how clients and teams interact around safety, workplace environments, and health equity.

## Presentation Highlights

- The global health human resources crisis is reshaping OR nursing roles.
- Findings from a two-phase qualitative study on optimizing perioperative roles and RPN utilization in the OR.
- Identifies key facilitators and barriers to RPN integration in the OR.



**Dr. Nicole Guitar,**  
The Role of Nurses in  
Inpatient Geriatric  
Rehabilitation Units:  
A Scoping Review

Dr. Guitar, a Research Scientist at Western University, holds a PhD and Master of Physical Therapy from Western (2021, 2020) and a Master's in Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience.

## Presentation Highlights

- Review of findings from a scoping review on nurses' contributions to inpatient geriatric rehabilitation.
- Highlights around alignment and gaps in reported practices and competency frameworks.

# Speakers



**Dr. Kristin Prentice**  
Promoting Resilience  
in Home and  
Community Care:  
Building Forward

Dr. Prentice, a postdoctoral associate in Western University's School of Physical Therapy, has over 15 years of experience working with older adults in long-term care, hospital, and community settings. She currently collaborates with the Connelly research team on strategies to recruit, retain, and revitalize the nursing workforce in long-term and home care.

## Presentation Highlights

- Discussion around a three-part expert panel hosted by the Connelly research team and WeRPN.
- The panel featured home and community care experts and focused on RPNs' resilience.
- Interactive discussions to improve WeRPN resources to better support RPNs.



**Grace Felix,**  
Building a  
Resilience Plan

Grace is an RPN with experience in acute care, long-term care, and home/community care, both in Canada and internationally. With seven years in Ontario's not-for-profit sector, she has focused on nursing registration, client advocacy, and employment processes. She joined WeRPN in 2022 as a case manager in the BEGIN program and transitioned to Professional Practice Associate in 2023, where she supports professional practice initiatives and projects.



**JP Munro,**  
Strengthening your  
Well-being: Self Care  
Apps for Life and  
Practice

JP Munro is an RPN with experience in acute medicine and home/community care, currently working in Professional Practice at WeRPN. He holds a business management diploma from Humber College and is pursuing a Bachelor of Health Administration at Toronto Metropolitan University. As a Practice Associate, JP supports the WeRPN Ambassador Program, addresses member practice concerns, and contributes to various practice resources, including those on self-care, cultural competence, and DEIB.

## Presentation Highlights

- Self-care is crucial for building resilience in nurses, impacting both personal and professional well-being.
- This session will explore self-care strategies and resources to help nurses thrive.
- Focus on how self-care supports resilience in navigating workplace challenges and maintaining overall health.



**Sonia Nizzer,**  
Amplifying RPN  
Nurse Leadership:  
Emotional Support  
Practices in Home  
and Community Care

Sonia is a registered social worker and senior research associate at VHA Home HealthCare, leading mental health research. Her current work focuses on the intersection of work and wellbeing among the home and community care workforce. Sonia is passionate about addressing precarity, structural barriers, workplace psychological health, and using arts-informed research approaches.

## Presentation Highlights

- RPN leaders in Ontario home and community care manage large teams and are responsible for team mental health and wellbeing (MHWB), an often-overlooked aspect of their role.
- A two-phased participatory-action study explored issues impacting team wellbeing and RPN leader practices, with findings highlighting increasing work and personal stressors.

# Speakers



**Natalie Weiser,**  
Development and  
Implementation of a  
Novel Nursing Shift  
Assignment Toolkit

Natalie, a Research Coordinator III at Unity Health Toronto, specializes in sociological and qualitative research. She supports nurses and health clinicians on the Interprofessional Practice-Based Research team, guiding practice-based research projects.

## Presentation Highlights

- Overview of the development and implementation of a novel shift assignment toolkit, building on previous research about integrating RPNs in acute care.
- Key findings from the initial study: the importance of trust within interdisciplinary teams and role clarity for RPNs.



**Dr. Denise Connelly,**  
Co-Design for  
Virtual PIECES Care  
Planning in Long-  
term Care Homes:  
Implementation of a  
Functional Framework  
and Toolkit

Dr. Denise Connelly, Associate Professor at Western University's School of Physical Therapy, focuses on addressing the nursing workforce crisis in long-term and home care. Her research explores nurse career-bridging initiatives, recruitment and retention of new graduates, nurse resilience, and collaborative care for older adults.

## Presentation Highlights

- This project implemented the PIECES care planning framework via virtual video-calling during the COVID-19 pandemic, with support from RPN Champions in two long-term care homes.
- RPN Champions were guided by PIECES mentors, the research team, RPN peers, and managers.
- The session will share insights from the research process and foster discussion on integrating research into clinical practice.



**Dr. Melissa Hay,**  
Co-Design for  
Virtual PIECES Care  
Planning in Long-  
term Care Homes:  
Implementation of a  
Functional Framework  
and Toolkit

Melissa Hay, a Postdoctoral Associate at Western University and registered physiotherapist, is passionate about exploring the experiences and perspectives of patients, families, and healthcare providers. She focuses on translating research into clinical practice to improve client care.



**Sasha Smith,**  
RPN Research  
Fellowship Experi-  
ence, and Preparing a  
Research Fellowship  
Proposal

Sasha is a registered practical nurse with over a decade of experience in neurological and orthopedic rehabilitation, she is passionate about medical education and advancing nurse mental health. As a grant recipient and principal investigator, Sasha has researched nurse resilience and mentored new nurses, fostering a supportive learning environment.

## Presentation Highlights

- This session offers guidance on crafting research grant proposals tailored for RPNs, sharing motivations, challenges, and strategies for success.
- Co-facilitated by Sasha Smith and Nancy Snobelen, it provides practical tips and activities to build grant-writing confidence.
- Attendees will gain tools to navigate the grant application process effectively.



**Dr. Nancy Snobelen,**  
RPN Research  
Fellowship Experi-  
ence, and Preparing a  
Research Fellowship  
Proposal

Dr. Snobelen, a research consultant for WeRPN and non-practicing Speech-Language Pathologist, holds a Doctor of Health Administration, MBA, and BSc in Communication Disorders. She values collaborating with RPNs and sharing insights from today's presenters.

# Speakers



**Dr. Winnie Sun,**  
Developing a  
Workplace Retention  
Framework in  
Long-term Care

Dr. Winnie Sun, Associate Professor at Ontario Tech University and Co-Research Director of the Advancement in Dementia Care Centre, focuses on healthy aging and dementia care. Recently awarded Ontario Tech's Research Excellence Chair, she advances the AVOID Frailty Model of Care in Durham Region and beyond.

## Presentation Highlights

- This presentation reviews findings from an integrative review on LTC staff retention and the development of a comprehensive framework to address staffing issues.
- The study's results guide the next stages of research, focusing on RPN involvement in identifying key factors for LTC staff retention.
- The goal is to co-create a workforce retention framework for the LTC sector.



**Oghenefegor Uwejey,**  
Developing a  
Workplace Retention  
Framework in  
Long-term Care

Oghenefegor Uwejey, a dual-licensed RPN and RN, has experience in elder care and workforce retention research in long-term care. A 2024-2025 WeRPN Research Fellowship Award recipient, she serves as RPN Representative on WeRPN's Research Advisory Council and contributed to this study as a Research Assistant.



**Dr. Denise Connelly,**  
A Leave of Absence  
Might Not be a Bad  
Thing: Registered  
Practical Nurses  
Working in Home Care  
During the COVID-19  
Pandemic

Dr. Denise Connelly, Associate Professor at Western University's School of Physical Therapy, focuses on addressing the nursing workforce crisis in long-term and home care. Her research explores nurse career-bridging initiatives, recruitment and retention of new graduates, nurse resilience, and collaborative care for older adults.

## Presentation Highlights

- This project surveyed 672 RPNs to explore relationships between resilience, work factors, and decisions to leave or take a leave of absence from the home and community care sector.
- Findings revealed no significant difference in resilience scores for nurses who left or considered leaving, but those who took a leave of absence scored significantly higher in resilience and emotional intelligence.



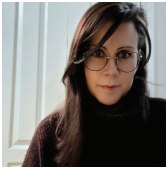
**Jen Calver,**  
Strengthening the  
Impact of Scoping  
Review Findings  
Related to Retention  
and Psychological  
Health And Safety  
in Long-Term Care

Jen Calver is a Registered Practical Nurse and a PhD candidate at Ontario Tech University. She also works with WeRPN as a Research Coordinator and is a Graduate Research Assistant/Project Manager with Dr. Winnie Sun on several research projects related to dementia care, and nurse recruitment and retention. Her research interests include the healthcare workforce and the care of older adults.

## Presentation Highlights

- This session explores findings from a literature review on retention in long-term care, focusing on psychological health and safety.
- Participants will discuss the integration of evidence with professional judgment and its relevance to practice.

# Speakers



**Jennifer McCauley,**  
Bridging Education  
Program in Nursing –  
Professional Practice  
Development and  
Role Transition

Jennifer McCauley, a Registered Practical Nurse with over 15 years of experience in primary care, is dedicated to preventative health and promoting wellness. She now serves as a BEGIN Case Manager with WeRPN, supporting new nurses and those advancing their careers.

## Presentation Highlights

- This presentation shares empirical research on the challenges new graduate nurses face when transitioning from education to practice in long-term care (LTC) and home and community care (HCC).
- It explores RPNs' perspectives to help healthcare leaders better support transitions and improve recruitment and retention in LTC and HCC sectors.
- An interactive discussion will follow, allowing participants to identify key transition factors and additional resources for ongoing support.



**Dr. Melissa Hay,**  
Bridging Education  
Program in Nursing –  
Professional Practice  
Development and  
Role Transition

Melissa Hay, a Postdoctoral Associate at Western University and registered physiotherapist, is passionate about exploring the experiences and perspectives of patients, families, and healthcare providers. She focuses on translating research into clinical practice to improve client care.



**Dianne Martin,**  
Opening Remarks

Dianne Martin, MA, BScN, RPN, RN, has been a nurse since 1979 and is dually registered as an RN and RPN. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Master of Leadership and is the CEO of WeRPN, where she has fostered greater understanding and respect among nursing categories. Dianne developed the Knowledge Process Model, used internationally to ensure safe nursing practice, based on patient need.

With experience in perinatal care and leadership roles, she received an honorary Bachelor of Applied Studies in 2015 and the Premier's Award in 2016.

Dianne is the proud daughter of a nurse, as well as a mother to a nurse, and she holds all those who care for others in the highest regard.



# 2024 WeRPN Research Report

Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) represent **29.5%** of the practising nursing workforce in Ontario, which is about **60,000 nurses**. RPNs are leaders who foster continued self-growth to meet the challenges of an evolving healthcare system to deliver quality person-centred nursing care. We (RPNs) are healthcare professionals who work in settings or circumstances where healthcare is delivered. The aim of WeRPN's research program is to redefine RPN roles, impact, and credibility through evidence.

As a result of the WeRPN call for research proposals, and RPN research fellowship proposals, WeRPN funded **4-research studies**, and **3-RPN research fellowship** between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. Findings from studies are being shared via presentations, including WeRPNs Research Symposium, publications (scholarly and professional papers), and dissemination of prototypes and information across organizations.

## PUBLICATIONS

To view the list of 2023-2024 publications, visit **WeRPN.com/Research**. Stay tuned for more information and details about exciting changes to WeRPNs public library.

## RECRUITMENT AND PARTNERSHIP REQUESTS 2023-2024

WeRPN assists researchers seeking to include RPN participants in their studies or to partner/collaborate with WeRPN in research. An external request form is available at **WeRPN.com/Research**. All completed submissions are independently reviewed by members of the research advisory council.

WeRPN assisted 7-research teams to disseminate recruitment materials through WeRPN membership newsletters, and across social media channels, participated in 3-partnership studies, and 2-applications for new research grants.

## ONGOING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES 2024-2025

**WeRPN Funded Research (2024-2025):** Grants were awarded to 7-research teams exploring a variety of topics across sectors.

**WeRPN RPN Research Fellowship (2024-2025):** Three RPN Research Fellows sponsored for research projects, including palliative care for persons with dementia micro-credential training for BEGIN recipients; RPNs knowledge and experience with post-stroke spasticity in LTC; and the emotional Model of Care project.

**Research Partnership:** WeRPN is collaborating with 3-research teams, including 1-3 year CIHR Team Grant 'Strengthening Health Workforce for System Transformation' led by Dr. Rosanna Yoon; 1-3 year SSHRC grant 'Integration and use of the Observe Coach Assist and Report (OCAR) framework to structure the practice of personal support providers in home-based care' led by Dr. Margaret Saari; and 1-We Spark grant 'Enhancing stroke rehabilitation interdisciplinary teams: Exploring rehabilitation nursing practices and perspectives of RPNs and RPNs' led by Dr. Eric Tanlaka.

## WERPN RESEARCH GRANTS JULY 2023- JUNE 2024

- 1 Impact of a novel nursing shift assignment toolkit on interprofessional role clarity and collaboration on acute inpatient units with newly introduced RPN roles, led by Sonya Canzian at Unity Health.
- 2 Optimizing the role of the RPN in the Operating Room: Exploring facilitators and barriers to facilitate career opportunities, led by Dr. Sherry Espin & Dr. Sue Bookey-Basset at Toronto Metropolitan University.
- 3 Amplifying RPN nurse leadership: Emotional support practices in the home and community care sector, led by Sonia Nizzer at VHA
- 4 Developing a workplace retention framework to build capacity in long-term care using a Delphi approach, led by Dr. Winnie Sun

## WERPN RPN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS JULY 2023-JUNE 2024

- 1 Victoria Pringle, *RPN Research Fellow*; Dr. Sherry Espin & Dr. Susan Bookey-Basset, *Research Mentors*; Leslie Gauthier, *Executive Sponsor*
- 2 Abigail Wilson, *RPN Research Fellow*; Dr. Debbilyn Murray, *Research Mentor*; Sherida Chambers, *Executive Sponsor*
- 3 Sasha Smith, *RPN Research Fellow*; Dr. Lianne Jeffs, *Research Mentor*; Jane Merkley, *Executive Sponsor*

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR RPN EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- Quarterly research webinars
- Introduction to Research for RPNs, online course
- Bi-monthly WeResearch Newsletter
- Monthly Pulse Newsletter
- *We Are Practical Nursing* e-Magazine

## **Thank you to our Research Advisory Council Members (2024-2025)**

### **Oghenefegor Uwejeaya**

RPN Representative

### **Samantha Salatino**

RPN Representative

### **April Plumton**

Public Representative

### **Pat Bower**

Public Representative

### **Edward Cruz**

Academic Representative – University

### **Shelia West**

Academic Representative – College

### **Lindsay Pentland**

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### **Annette Weeres**

Chief Nursing Practice and Research

### **Jen Calver**

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