

A Legacy Retires, A New Voice Rises

Board of Directors ONL NJ



It is with deep appreciation that we announce the retirement of Susan Cholewka, an extraordinary Executive Director, who has served

the Organization of Nurse Leaders of New Jersey with unwavering dedication for the past 18 years. Susan retired at the end of June, leaving behind a legacy of visionary leadership that has shaped ONL NJ into what it is today.

Susan has been more than a leader — she has been the heart of this organization. Her steadfast support of the board, committees, and members has guided ONL NJ through seasons of growth, transformation, and challenge. Her passion for nursing leadership and tireless advocacy elevated the mission and helped position ONL NJ as one of the strongest AONL affiliates in the country. Her ability to foster collaboration and inspire excellence has left a profound and lasting mark on all of us.

ONL NJ is immensely grateful for the difference Susan has made the nursing profession. Her spirit and impact will continue to resonate in the work we do and the leaders we become. We wish her all the best as she embarks on this next chapter, one that is sure to be as meaningful and inspiring as her years with ONL NJ.



At this pivotal moment, we are also proud to introduce and warmly welcome Soniya Sheth, MSN, APN, NP - BC as our new Ex-

ecutive Director. A devoted clinician, respected healthcare leader, and passionate advocate for nursing leadership, Soniya brings more than 20 years of experience in patient care, clinical operations, and quality improvement.

With a strong commitment to mentorship and leadership development, Soniya is eager to build on the foundation Susan has laid, continuing to support and em-

power nurses across New Jersey to lead with confidence, vision, and purpose. From her impactful work at Carrum Health to her statewide collaborations at the New Jersey Hospital Association, Soniya has demonstrated a deep commitment to advancing patient safety and quality care through nursing leadership, research, and innovation.

Soniya holds a Master of Science in Nursing from Rutgers University and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Pennsylvania. She is actively involved in several professional organizations, including ACHE, ANA, AONL, and NJSNA. She lives in Moorestown, NJ, with her husband, two children, and their Mini Labradoodle. When not working, she enjoys traveling, yoga, and cheering on her kids at track and tennis meets.

Please join us in extending our heartfelt congratulations to Susan on her retirement and a warm welcome to Soniya as she steps into this new chapter with ONL NJ. We are excited for the future and grateful for the incredible legacy that continues to inspire us all. ■

Time of Change and Transition

Edna Cadmus, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN



Sometimes we have to look back and recognize our successes to move forward. In 2011, the Institute of Medicine (now National Academy of Medicine) released its first report, *Future of Nursing: Leading Change Advancing Health*. This launched the Future of Nursing: Campaign for Action and the Center for Champion

Nursing in America, both initiatives of AARP Foundation, AARP and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. New Jersey (NJ) was one of the first five Action Coalition (AC) in the country. I would like to recognize the original co-leads Mary Ann Christopher, Dave Knowlton, and myself. Mary Ann was then followed by Mary Wachter as a co-lead. During this time, we had many funders to help support our work. In 2015, NJAC realigned the

strategic plan focused on building a culture of health in NJ. Jennifer Polakowski connected students with community organizations.

In 2014, the NJAC was integrated into the work of NJ Collaborating Center for Nursing (NJCCN) as the work aligned with our mission and vision. There were many accomplishments from our work to bring both practice and academe together. The 5 pillars of our work were: 1) transform-



ing practice for APNs, 2) transforming education, 3) transforming leadership, 4) workforce data and 5) transforming nursing practice. Academic practice models were funded to help transform education with Dr. Maria Torchia LoGripippo taking the lead with our academic partners.

In 2021, a second report was released from the National Academy of Medicine's Future of Nursing 2020-2030: Charting a Path to Health Equity. Based on this report, NJ identified several key areas as a focus. Dr. Nina Raoji led the 4 pillars that partners prioritized for NJAC which were 1) workforce focused on health equity and areas of shortage 2) strengthening nursing education, 3) emotional health

and well-being which supports the work of NJ-NEW and 4) policy for modernizing full practice authority.

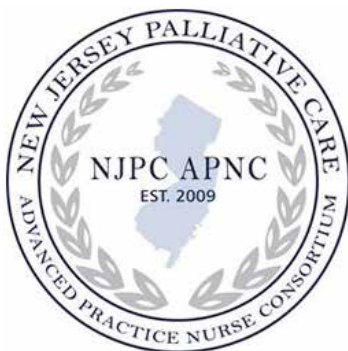
Some of the accomplishments led by NJCCN in collaboration with our partners over the years include: 1) transition into practice programs for new graduates in acute care, long term care, and Advanced Practice Providers, 2) supporting NJ NEW initiatives to reduce stress and burnout for nurses, 3) establishment of a tri-council of all deans and directors across programs to share best practices, 4) advocating for policy changes to modernize APN legislation and other workforce bills, 5) representing Nurses on Boards Coalition and 6) publishing workforce data at a

state and national level.

While the Campaign for Action and Center for Champion Nursing in America sunsets the work will not be lost but transitioned to the National Forum of State Nursing Workforce Centers and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN). Work will be archived on the RWJF site. Our state work through NJCCN and our partners will continue to focus on recruitment and retention of nurses across settings, policy changes for the nursing workforce, and emotional health and well-being to meet our obligations for the residents of NJ and our nursing workforce. ■

Addressing New Jersey's Serious Illness Needs Through Palliative Care: The Impact of the New Jersey Palliative Care APN Consortium (NJPC APNC)

Yusimi Sobrino-Bonilla, MSN, APN, ANP-BC, CCRN, ACHPN



As New Jersey's population ages, more residents are living longer while managing multiple chronic conditions. This increases the need for comprehensive, supportive care. An estimated 400,000 people in New Jersey are currently living

with serious illnesses, a number that is expected to grow in the coming years. Palliative care plays a vital role in addressing the complex physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of these individuals and their families. Integrating palliative care into routine practice ensures patients receive compassionate, coordinated care aligned with their goals and values.

The New Jersey Palliative Care Advanced Practice Nurse Consortium (NJPC APNC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding access to high-quality, evidence-based palliative care for residents across New Jersey. Founded with a commitment to collaborative practice, mentorship, and advocacy, NJPC APNC

serves as a resource for APNs and the broader healthcare community to enhance the delivery of compassionate care to individuals with serious illnesses.

NJPC APNC's work aligns with state health initiatives and broader goals for healthcare improvement. One of its core efforts is to promote palliative care awareness and knowledge among healthcare professionals throughout New Jersey. By collaborating with healthcare professionals across all disciplines, the Consortium helps foster an integrated, team-based approach to palliative care delivery. Key activities include:

- Mentoring new and emerging palliative care providers and members of the