

Passing the Stethoscope: Nursing Wisdom Across Generations

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Think about your nursing career for a minute. Who is the nurse you still remember?

Maybe it was the nurse who helped you survive your first few months of practice. The one you could ask a question without feeling like you should already know the answer. Maybe it was someone who told you that you were ready for a leadership role before you believed it yourself. Or maybe it was the nurse who pulled you aside one day and gave you advice that you still think about.

We all have someone.

But did you ever call that person your mentor?

I am not sure I did.

When we hear the word *mentoring*, I think we sometimes make it more complicated than it needs to be. We picture a formal program, an assigned mentor, scheduled meetings, and goals written on a form. There is nothing wrong with that type of mentoring. But if I think about the people who have had the greatest influence on my nursing career, most of those relationships did not start with someone saying, "I am going to be your mentor."

They started with a conversation.

A question.

Someone taking the time to listen.

Or someone saying, "Let me tell you what I learned."

That is what I like about the idea of flash mentoring.

Flash mentoring is a short, focused conversation about a question, topic, or experience. There is no expectation of a long-term mentoring relationship. You have a conversation. You ask questions. You share what you know. You listen to someone else's experience. And maybe you walk away think-

ing about something different.

This fall, ANA-Michigan will launch **Passing the Stethoscope: Nursing Wisdom Across Generations**, a Flash Mentoring Series created to allow nurses to have these conversations.

Because the truth is, nursing can be hard to navigate.

How do I get involved beyond my job? Is leadership something I want to do? Should I go back to school? What if I want to change directions after years in the same role? How do I find my place in this profession? And at some point, many of us start asking a different question: What do I know now that might help another nurse?

I have learned a lot from other nurses throughout my career. Some lessons came from people with many more years of experience than I had. Others came from nurses who were newer to the profession and made me look at something differently. That is the point. We all have something to learn, and we all have something we can share.

The Flash Mentoring Series will start conversations about **what mentoring really is, generational wisdom, what we wish someone had told us earlier, and how to become involved in professional nursing organizations and leadership.**

Nothing complicated. Just nurses talking to nurses about the things we do not always have time to talk about.

So, think about your own nursing career.

What do you wish someone had told you earlier?

And then ask yourself one more question.

Who might need to hear it now?

We hope you will join us this fall and help us pass the stethoscope.



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