



## **Summary**

This report outlines the work to date related to exploring the Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario's (NLN.ON's) role in mentorship. Activities have been undertaken to engage with NLN membership in order to ensure the "voice" of NLN members is central to planning. Additionally, NLN.ON has contracted with Mary Wheeler and Michelle Cooper, of donnerwheeler, to support components of the planning. Key activities and outcomes are outlined as well as recommendations for next steps.

## **Background**

The Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario has a rich history of supporting nursing leadership initiatives across Ontario. Past NLN.ON board meetings have included discussions about where mentorship fits within the spectrum of opportunities that the NLN offers to its members. Recent NLN.ON's board discussions around recruitment and retention strategies as well as the importance of mentorship in the development of future nurse leaders, has led the NLN board to approve further exploration of NLN.ON's role in mentorship. On May 27th, 2013, a 4 question survey was sent out to all NLN.ON members asking them for their ideas and opinions about the role of NLN.ON in mentorship. Respondents were also asked if they would be interested in participating in a facilitated on line session to help NLN.ON plan their mentorship strategy. Subsequently, on August 1, 2013 a facilitated discussion was held with 17 NLN.ON members to develop a mentorship strategy for the NLN.ON board to review, discuss and determine next steps at their September board meeting. Further details of these activities will be shared in this report.

## **Findings**

### **Summary of NLN.ON Membership Survey:**

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013 an e-blast was sent out to all NLN.ON members asking them for their ideas and opinions about NLN.ON's role in mentorship. A total of 110 members responded and provided the following feedback:

- 98 respondents felt that NLN.ON should be taking an active role in creating mentorship opportunities for its members
- Approximately half of the respondents indicated that they would like to be involved as a mentor and half of the respondents indicated they would like to participate as a mentee. Several respondents conveyed interest in both a mentor and mentee role

Respondents had several other suggestions including;

- providing webinars/webcasts, workshops and educational materials pertaining to mentorship
- creating a database of potential mentors and mentees and providing matching opportunities
- creating forums for sharing and job shadowing and connecting with mentors/mentees
- developing a mentorship section on the NLN website. This could have an interactive component

- making tools and resources available to support mentorship relationships
- exploring ways to showcase mentorship success stories and initiatives

A total of 64 survey respondents indicated they would be interested in participating in a workgroup to help plan how NLN.ON might become involved in mentorship. A follow up e-mail was sent to these members to ask them to participate in an on line planning session. A total of 30 individuals indicated they would be interested in supporting this work.

**Summary of NLN.ON Mentorship Facilitated Session:**

A 3 hour online member consultation session was held on August 1, 2013 using Blackboard Collaborate and was facilitated by Mary Wheeler and Michelle Cooper (see attached agenda). Twenty-two people registered for the event and seventeen signed on for the session (see attached participant list). Prior to the session participants were provided with a mentorship backgrounder paper as well as the results from the membership survey.

Guiding Principles for the session were shared with participants at the outset of the session and included;

- Practical, achievable and sustainable
- Low maintenance/low infrastructure redesign required
- Leverages existing NLN.ON tools and resources (i.e. newsletter, website, annual conference, etc.)
- Not a overview of mentorship theory-develop a mentorship strategy

**Other Kinds of Mentorship Activities:**

In addition to the backgrounder that was provided, which highlighted various mentorship programs/offerings, participants were asked to identify additional mentorship activities/processes they were familiar with. Participants identified several mentorship initiatives that they were aware of through their work or other professional associations, including:

1. Filling in a profile and a match is made for the mentee; then mentee takes on role of mentor in the next year
2. Accessing a Performance Mentor ( can be more than one) to support individual in a new role
3. Using Linked-In for informal mentorship match
4. Applying for an RNAO Fellowship
5. Manager taking on role of mentor as part of position- this garnered much discussion, participants wanting tips on how to fulfil this role

**Vision for NLN Mentorship:**

Participants were asked to identify what they felt should be key elements of the NLN.ON vision for mentorship.

The following question was asked,

*Imagine it is 5 years from now and NLN has successful mentorship strategies in place. What would you see, hear, say? List the key features in this vision.*

Key features identified include;

- NLN a leader/hub in mentorship
- mentorship tools and resources in place to support members
- access to tools and tips for successful mentoring
- using technology to meet multigenerational needs
- an exemplary mentorship program with a framework that can be used world wide
- a pool of mentors from across the province
- a repository of member interests and skills
- an easy matching system
- regular opportunities to hear about mentoring success stories and initiatives
- a full and robust data base
- leaders in northern and southern Ontario connected
- sharing of wisdom and experiences

A draft vision statement was developed based on these key features and is as follows:

*NLN is a Community of Practice leading, connecting, and supporting members as they develop leadership capacity through mentorship.*

Participants were then asked, “Based on this vision what could NLN do immediately?” Most ideas fell into four categories, as follows;

*1. Newsletter*

- follow up with an update from the working group and Board of Director's decision
- using it for profiling success stories and resources related to mentorship
- mentorship Q&A
- circulate more widely

*2. Conference*

- include mentorship as a theme, pre-conference event or dinner
- forum for mentorship sharing
- call for abstracts OR plenary OR panel
- booth at conference to generate data base online ...mentor pool and share with members
- look at ways to connect junior/senior leaders
- stream topics developing leaders, executives

3. *Website*

- blog
- Q&A
- chat line
- resources
- webinars

4. *Other*

- leadership competency information
- tool-kit on establishing and maintaining a formal mentorship program in the workplace
- hold retreat to present summary of the working session and develop model/structure for program

Participants also expressed their thoughts and ideas about possible long term mentorship strategies based on the vision that had been created. These include;

- make leading mentorship an NLN director role (e.g. like conference chair)
- develop a 3 year mentorship strategic plan
- align strategies with succession planning focus
- create regional networking events /conferences on mentorship- video/OTN
- develop a foundational program that could be marketed and sold to help organizations develop mentorship programs
- develop a matching system to match new and experienced leaders
- BPG mentoring leaders
- *Breakfast With* events
- partner with Colleges/Universities to develop a framework

At the conclusion of the planning session, participants were informed that their feedback would be shared at the September NLN.ON board meeting and a summary of the board's decision would be shared with members shortly after.

## **Recommendations**

Based on feedback from NLN.ON members and input from Mary Wheeler and Michelle Cooper, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Adopt a director role to be the lead for mentorship as part of the NLN board structure to ensure that mentorship and mentorship strategies are sustained
- Incorporate mentorship as a distinct strategic intention/direction in the NLN strategic plan
- Determine the annual resources available to dedicate to mentorship strategies to inform a mentorship strategic plan
- Make a decision about the target group for mentorship strategies (members, non members)

- Develop a 3 year mentorship strategic plan to flesh out the ideas presented in the summary with more detail
- Engage the interest and passion of the participants to work with the Board to develop the strategic plan and consider their involvement in leading/participating in sub-groups
- Determine the role of consultants (DonnerWheeler) in next steps
- Include a mentorship stream or pre-conference workshop in the 2014 conference
- Launch the mentorship strategic plan at this conference
- Provide a summary of what was done over the summer and next steps in the next newsletter
- Determine which of the “quick win” ideas can be incorporated pending the strategic plan being developed
- Ensure there is capacity for simple data base management capabilities in the new website that is being developed, to allow some matching strategies in future if that is part of the strategic plan.
- Incorporate NLN's role in mentorship into the NLN.ON recruitment strategy i.e. promotion
- Develop an evaluation plan of mentorship initiatives to measure success

## **Conclusions**

The Nursing Leadership Network of Ontario has made significant contributions to shaping and supporting nurse leaders and administrators across the province. NLN.ON has a unique opportunity to engage with its membership through a mentorship initiative. NLN.ON is committed to linking strategically with nurse leaders across the province in order to influence the future direction of health care. The inclusion of a mentorship strategy in the NLN.ON's strategic directions would fit well with this commitment and could also be leveraged as a key recruitment and retention strategy.



# Agenda

- Welcome and check-in
- Setting the context for the meeting
- Summary results from the member survey
- Participant intentions – What brought you to the meeting?
- Other examples of mentorship strategies from participant experience
- Vision for NLN.ON mentorship strategies
- Short term mentorship strategies – How can NLN.ON leverage current tools and resources?
- Longer term mentorship strategies – What new possibilities could you recommend?
- Prioritizing ideas
- Next steps
- Closing



Agenda

## **Participants**

**Facilitators-** Mary Wheeler and Michelle Cooper

**NLN.ON Lead** --Judy Shearer

**First Stage** – Jessica Kerr

Sandra Li-James

Kim Hendrick

Bukola Kolawole

Whitehead Meredith

Donna Rothwell

Cheryl Lyons

Kim Storey

Lori Adler

Ruth Turner

Amy Hallaran

Doreen Armstrong-Ross

Laura Duffield

Akua Yirenskyi

Lorraine Carrington

Woodstock Hospital (3 participants)