Improving Nursing Workplaces: The Blueprint is There

Friday, May 16, 2003 – With health care reform on everybody's lips, it is a sad fact that nurses have to put up with some of the unhealthiest workplaces in the country.

A higher percentage of nurses than any other group of workers rate their own health as poor. Absenteeism rates among nurses are double the average for all workers, as are days lost to illness or disability.

Good quality health care in Canada depends on addressing those signs of distress in the profession, and the best route to that is through improvements in the workplace.

In a recent presentation to the Nurses 21st Century Leadership Conference in Halifax, CPRN's President, Judith Maxwell, drew on a number of CPRN synthesis papers to sketch out a blueprint for change.

In ***Nurses and their Workplaces: The Policy Drivers Matter***, Maxwell describes three "parallel pathways" to improving the health care workplace;

- System-wide change in health human resource planning by governments, educators and stakeholders.
- Institutional and workplace change to improve the conditions of work nurses face.
- New forms of health care delivery that alter the way nurses contribute to health care.

She reviews what is required by each of these, assesses the chances of success, and calls on those responsible to commit themselves to all three paths.

Childcare Book Now in Paperback

WHO CARES? Women's Work, Childcare, and Welfare State Redesign, edited by Family Network Director, Jane Jenson and Mariette Sineau, is now available in paperback from the University of Toronto Press.

The book compares the national experience with child care in Belgium, France, Italy, Sweden and the European Union. It provides information on recent child care policies and a clear perspective on thinking about welfare state redesign. The contributors examine how public policy choices over the past three decades have been fashioned by specific understandings of the gendered division of labour.

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