

Celebration of a Nurse who has been a leading force for change

Patricia Roy, RN



Patricia Roy, RN, has spent over 40 years of her nursing career working with and advocating for those who do not have a voice or have been silenced by the conditions of their lives, and ultimately has been at the front lines of change. While she spent time in the acute care setting in an Intensive Care Unit in Sarnia, Ontario immediately following her graduation from the Bathurst School of Nursing, early in her career she moved into Public Health in the Bathurst area. Within that role in the 1970s and 1980s, Pat provided services across the life span of clients, building relationships and a network of professional contacts who highly respected her.

Despite being a mother of four or maybe, because she was the mother of four, Pat had a heart and commitment to the health and well-being of youth. Recognizing this, she was asked to develop the first sexual health clinic in Bathurst in response to a very high teen pregnancy rate in that area of New Brunswick. Inside of six months, the clinic was established and flourished over the next eight years. A visionary, Pat had clear ideas about what was necessary if a sexual health clinic was to attract those who most needed the services. Since she had such an extensive professional network, she was able to consult with and draw from the work of her colleagues locally and across the province, and build upon this work. As a result, a free standing sexual health clinic was created which youth accessed readily, experiencing an environment of respect, safety and confidentiality where programming was based on community need and reflected best practices. Within eight years, the teen pregnancy rate dropped significantly.

Never satisfied to maintain the status quo, Pat has always looked for opportunities to contribute to positive change and social justice within her community. While

coordinating the sexual health clinic, Pat became an educational partner with University of New Brunswick (UNB) Faculty of Nursing, Bathurst site, and provided excellent leadership and guidance to nursing students. Many of those students, now practicing nurses, and some of them, even teaching with UNB Faculty of Nursing in Bathurst, recall the opportunities for learning that Pat provided. She was a role model and encouraged leadership for change. With her vision for population health and community capacity building, Pat was frequently sought to be involved with community boards and activities. She worked on issues related to housing, homelessness, and pregnant youth. She mentored many and worked diligently with commitment to societal change which would benefit those who were challenged by life experiences.

In 2001, Pat retired from Public Health but this was not to be the end of her career in nursing. Very shortly afterward, Pat was sought by Pabineau First Nations to help establish a health and wellness program in their community. This community remembered Pat from her days as a Public Health Nurse when she would come into their homes, work with their families, old and young. Her professional presence and expertise, compassion, and kindness remained outstanding even 20 years later. Once again, the visionary imagined what could be, sought the partnerships at all levels necessary to complete her vision, and worked diligently within the First Nations Community and the larger community of Bathurst to find allies and supports. Despite serious health challenges, Pat has achieved her goal – a free standing health clinic with a number of programs and health care providers who visit the clinic to provide services to the community. Once again, Pat is partnering with the UNB Faculty of Nursing so that students can have excellent experiences within the First Nations setting and develop expertise and knowledge. She is passing on her enthusiasm for nursing and her commitment to envisioning and enacting change which leads to better health and wellbeing.

It is a privilege and an honour to work with Pat. She has been and continues to be a model for all nurses, a leader, and a visionary. Her work speaks to the importance of community health nursing and the relevance of the work we do.

Submitted by,

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