

## ICN launches new history of the organisation from 1899 to the present day

**Montreal, Canada; 1 July 2023** – The International Council of Nurses (ICN) has published a new book, *The Global Voice of Nursing, A history of the International Council of Nurses from 1899 to 2022*, detailing the history of the organisation from its humble beginnings at the end of the 19th Century to its present day role as the global voice of almost 30 million nurses worldwide.



Written by ICN's Senior Communications Advisor, Lindsey Williamson, the book chronicles the work of the organisation from its origins in the women's movement of the later 19th Century, through the turmoil of the Great Depression, the World Wars of the 20th Century up to the rapidly changing health care scene of the late 20th and early 21st Centuries, including the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

ICN has a long and rich history of advocating for the nursing profession and promoting health worldwide. Founded in 1899 with just four member national nursing associations, it has become the world's largest professional organisation for nurses, representing many millions of nurses in more than 130 countries worldwide.

Over the years, ICN has made significant achievements in advancing the nursing profession and improving global health. Some of the highlights include:

- The establishment of the first international nursing conference in 1901.
- The first definition of a 'nurse'.
- The introduction of the annual International Nurses Day to celebrate the profession on 12 May each year, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth date.
- The development of the ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses in 1953, which has been regularly updated and is adopted by nursing organisations around the world.
- Recognition as an important partner to the World Health Organization since its inception in 1948.
- The establishment of the Leadership for Change programme in 1996 and the Global Nursing Leadership Institute in 2008 to develop and strengthen nursing leadership worldwide
- The launch of the ICN International Nurse Practitioner/Advanced Practice Nursing Network in 2000 to support the development and recognition of advanced practice nursing roles.

ICN continues to work towards improving global health and the nursing profession. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was at the forefront of advocating for adequate protection and support for nurses, as well as ensuring that nurses are prioritised for vaccinations and included in vaccine distribution plans.

ICN continues to lobby for nurses internationally, promoting the importance of investing in nursing jobs, education, leadership and clinical practice, all in the interest of addressing growing global health challenges.

ICN President Dr Pamela Cipriano praised the new ICN History, bringing the organisation's history up to date, adding:

"ICN was founded 124 years ago today and it is fitting that this history is being launched on ICN's Founder's Day at the 29th ICN Congress in Montreal. As with all organisations, it is important that we know and understand our history so that we can learn from our predecessors and build on the rich legacy they have left us. Nurses everywhere owe a debt of gratitude to those amazing Victorian women who had the foresight to see how important unity was for the nursing profession, and the vision to make that unity a reality.

'Together we are stronger and more able to influence the health care we provide to our patients and their families, and to the communities we all live in.

'As we look to the future, ICN remains committed to advocating for the nursing profession, influencing global health policy, and promoting health worldwide, building on the legacy of the nurses who came before us, and looking to the future for those who have yet to discover what it is to be a nurse.'

*The Global Voice of Nursing, A history of the International Council of Nurses from 1899 to 2022* was launched at ICN's 29th Congress in Montreal, Canada. The 255-page e-book, which includes photographs illustrating its 124 year history, is available for purchase from [Amazon](#).

The ICN Congress is currently taking place in Montreal, Canada, 1-5 July 2023.

For more information go to <https://icncongress2023.org/> or follow us on social media: #ICNCongress #ICN2023 @ICNurses

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#### **Note to Editors**

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

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