

## GUEST EDITORIAL

# Each One Reach One Nurse



To celebrate National Nurses Week (May 6 to 12), let's commit ourselves to helping end the nursing shortage. Yes, it's within our power.

Think about it. There are nearly 3 million RNs in the United States.<sup>1</sup> If each nurse were to recruit or retain just one nurse, we could end the nursing shortage in just a few years. That's why, with the release of *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul, Second Dose*, I've initiated my *Each One Reach One Nurse* campaign. Here's how it works:

**E**ndorse nursing as a great career. When people ask, "Are you a nurse?" do you tell them how wonderful this profession is and how many opportunities it offers? Suggest nursing to middle-aged people seeking a career change.

**A**dvice teenagers to consider a nursing career too. Go to a middle or high school career day armed with free posters and videos available from Johnson and Johnson's Web site, [www.DiscoverNursing.com](http://www.DiscoverNursing.com).

**C**ounsel CNAs to get nursing degrees. We all know unlicensed assistive personnel who have what it takes to be a nurse. Encourage them to find funding and opportunities for higher education.

**H**elp a tired nurse stay in. When you recognize that a colleague is developing achy feet and an achy heart, offer support. Ask her what she needs to continue to serve.

### ONE

**R**ecruit a nonpracticing nurse to return. When I ask my audiences, "How many of you know a nurse who's not currently practicing in our profession?" about 20% of them raise their hands. Imagine increasing our workforce by 20%!

**E**ncourage nurses to teach. In 2007, over 40,000 qualified applicants were turned away from nursing programs for lack of instructors and schools.<sup>2</sup>

**A**ssist and support a new nurse. Would you be shocked to learn that nearly 30% of first-year nurses quit?<sup>2</sup> Take a new nurse under your wing.

**C**are for yourself and model that to others. It's time to stop complaining (or bragging) about not taking breaks or eating lunch.

**H**onor and recognize your colleagues. We can reward one another simply by acknowledging good work. Write a note. Speak up.

### ONE NURSE

Every nurse can use every one of the strategies I've mentioned. If each one of us reaches out to one—just one—our ranks will grow from the grass roots up. And who better to do it than us?

*LeAnn Thieman*

LeAnn Thieman LPN, CSP, CPAE

#### REFERENCES

1. American Nurses Association. About the ANA. <http://www.nursingworld.org>.
2. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. Nursing shortage fact sheet. <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/Media/shortageresource.htm>.

LeAnn Thieman is coauthor of *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul* and *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul, Second Dose* and a member of the *Nursing2009* editorial advisory board.

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