

## Omaha System Excellence Awards 2017

The biannual awards for meaningful and continued contributions to the Omaha System in Practice, Education, and Research were presented at the April 2017 Omaha System International Conference.

An **Excellence in Practice** award was presented to **Gail Peterson, RN, BSN**, Public Health Nurse, Polk County Health Department (PCHD), Balsam Lake, WI.

Gail has provided training and mentorship on the use of the Omaha System to all incoming public health nursing staff for the past 30 years. In 2011, the health department selected Nightingale Notes from CHAMP software as its new electronic health record (EHR) with a goal of having one record for all client-based programs. Prior to this, each program had its own charting system. Gail oriented staff of other MCH programs so that all could utilize the same EHR. Gail's latest accomplishment has been the creation of a crosswalk between the Omaha System and a Wisconsin maternal-child health data base (SPHERE) that had been converted into a documentation system for the Wisconsin Medical Assistance Prenatal Care Coordination Program (PNCC). SPHERE has been the only documentation program considered acceptable to the state, leaving those using the Omaha System within an EHR vulnerable to PNCC program audits. Gail took the SPHERE language and translated it into the language of the Omaha System, using it to align with the state program for assessment, care planning, health information and education, and case management. The changes Gail has made will make the health department less vulnerable to financial loss and more able to receive full reimbursement. Gail's skill in understanding the application of the Omaha System to public health work is remarkable and her commitment to the implementation of the Omaha System in local public health nursing practice is indeed exemplary.

An **Excellence in Education** award was presented to **Madeleine Kerr, PhD, RN**, Associate Professor, University of Minnesota, School of Nursing, Minneapolis, MN.

Dr. Kerr first incorporated the Omaha System in a public health nursing course at the University of Michigan in 1995, and later integrated it into a similar course at the University of Minnesota. From 2003 to 2005, she was funded to develop a clinical experience using standardized language in the electronic health record, and introduced the Omaha System to others. This grant became the foundation for educational innovations. In 2012, Dr. Kerr initiated the Omaha System International Windshield Survey project. The aims were to evaluate an Omaha System-based windshield survey tool for undergraduate nursing students, and the feasibility of using the Omaha System for community-level observations. Omaha System problems and strengths were generated by a total of 284 students from 5 countries; Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Turkey and the United States. Feasibility was successfully demonstrated. Dr. Kerr incorporated the Omaha System in the undergraduate Health Informatics course for the past 10 years, and collaborates with the Nursing Informatics Case Study group led by Dr. Debra Eardley. In 2012, she was awarded a faculty fellowship to develop *Nursing Informatics Experiences in Geographic Information Science*. Using GIS technology and the Omaha System, a geographic map of student-generated community observations was developed and applied internationally in collaboration with Dr. Michelle Honey at the University of Auckland. They presented their findings at Nursing Informatics 2016 in Geneva, Switzerland.

An **Excellence in Research** award was presented to **Frances Kam Yuet Wong, PhD, RN, FAAN, FHKAN**, Associate Dean, Faculty of Health & Social Sciences, Professor, School of Nursing, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong.

Dr. Wong has been applying the Omaha System in her program of research for over 15 years. The spread of the Omaha System within Asia can be directly attributed to her work. Her landmark work in translating the Omaha System into Chinese made it possible for millions of clinicians and researchers to use the Omaha System in their teaching, practice and research throughout Asia. Her global reach continues through the six PhD graduates who used the Omaha System in their studies while being mentored by Dr. Wong. Her prolific program of research and mentoring has produced 116 Omaha

System articles in Chinese and 28 in English peer reviewed journals. Her publications are in top tiered interprofessional journals and she is cited widely and often. The depth and breadth of Dr. Wong's Omaha System research is remarkable. In addition to general use of the Omaha System to document Transitional Care Interventions, she and her team have applied the Omaha System to care for patients with COPD, heart failure, stroke, cancer, hypertension, end stage renal disease, and coronary heart disease. The settings of care range from hospital to rehabilitation, to home and community. Her work covers the time from onset of illness to end of life. Dr. Wong truly demonstrates the value of the Omaha System and the breadth of its coverage as a standardized language to illustrate patient care. Dr. Wong also serves on the Omaha System Board of Directors.

We congratulate the three winners who are representative of the many individuals who have contributed to the Omaha System over the years. The nomination process is not difficult and we encourage each of you to identify others who have contributed and to make a nomination for the 2019 awards.