



**ICN Alliance
of Student and Early
Career Nurses**
International Council of Nurses

ICN SECN Alliance Newsletter - January 2026

As we reflect on the year that has just passed, we should be incredibly proud of the progress that has been made. Establishing the Alliance of Student and Early Career Nurses (ICN SECN Alliance) has been a significant milestone for ICN and for the student and early career nurses (SECN) who are shaping the future of our profession.

2025 marked the beginning of a new chapter for SECNs and signaled a powerful shift within the global nursing landscape. It affirmed that the voices of student and early career nurses are essential and must be included in discussions that influence global health. The establishment of the ICN SECN Alliance has demonstrated a fundamental truth: when SECNs are empowered, the future of health systems becomes stronger and more equitable.

The Student Assembly in Helsinki, Finland, held during the ICN 2025 Congress, highlighted the unity, creativity, and vision of SECNs around the world. It fostered meaningful dialogue, collaborative learning, and a strong foundation for ongoing engagement. The progress we have made reflects the strength of a truly global community, one in which diverse regional perspectives enrich our shared pursuit of health for all.

Across the world, SECNs have demonstrated remarkable initiative and leadership. They strengthened partnerships, contributed essential insights to discussions on education, practice, policy, and leadership, and championed the wellbeing of the nursing workforce. Your engagement has shown that the future of nursing is at its strongest when emerging professionals are supported and empowered to lead.

As we enter this year, we are ready to broaden our impact, enhance engagement across regions, and strengthen the leadership pipeline for the next generation of global nurse leaders. We will continue to advocate for your voices within ICN and across the global health community, ensuring that your perspectives are recognized and elevated within strategic decision-making.

The ICN SECN Alliance Steering Committee extends its sincere appreciation to the ICN Board for their leadership, support, and commitment to strengthening the role of students and early career nurses within the global nursing community. Our appreciation also goes to Senior Policy Advisor Erica Burton, whose vision, leadership, and commitment have been central to the development and establishment of the SECN Alliance. Her guidance and steadfast support have shaped our direction and strengthened the advancement of our mission.

Thank you for your continued commitment, your leadership, and the impact you make every day. We look forward to building on the strong foundation we have created together as we continue elevating the voices of students and early career nurses across the world.

Sincerely,

ICN Alliance of Student and Early Career Nurses Steering Committee

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ICN Alliance of Student and Early Career Nurses
International Council of Nurses



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We are excited to bring you the very first newsletter of the ICN SECN Alliance. This newsletter is to connect the community of student and early career nurses around the world by keeping you informed of the the work of the ICN SECN Alliance and the achievements of its Representatives and their constituencies.

An introduction to the ICN SECN Alliance

The International Council of Nurses (ICN) Alliance of Student and Early Career Nurses (SECN Alliance), representing student and early career nurses worldwide, will work to increase their participation and influence in global health and nursing policy dialogue through the work of ICN and its members and promote the voice of student and early career nurses from around the world at the international level. It will serve to support ICN National Nurses Association (NNA) members to strengthen and enhance meaningful engagement with their student and early career populations; support the ICN Board through advice and guidance on student and early career nurse issues and inspire the future leaders of the nursing profession to address global health challenges and improve global health for all.

Our goal is that SECNs are empowered and supported to meet the needs and promote the wellbeing of the world's population, student and early career nurses and the current and future nursing profession. NNAs have a supported, meaningful and effective collaborative relationship with students and early career nurses in their countries. ICN and its Board are well-supported and guided to address issues relevant to student and early career nurses in global health and nursing policy.

The ICN SECN Alliance is currently made up of 63 NNA-appointed Representatives. We continue to encourage ICN NNA members to appoint a Representative if they have not already.

Communication

The SECN Alliance is committed to staying engaged and ensuring continuous collaboration across regions.

The SECN Alliance is connected through both formal and informal communication channels: we can be reached by email (secn@icn.ch) and the newly launched SECN Alliance WhatsApp Community. The WhatsApp Community serves as a central space for Representatives to exchange ideas, discuss pressing nursing issues from national and regional perspectives, and promote participation in global nursing initiatives.

An external WhatsApp Community will be created for students and early career nurses globally to facilitate communication, strengthen peer-to-peer connection, encourage knowledge sharing, and foster a sense of belonging across regions.

A dedicated SECN Alliance webpage will be launched on the ICN website in the coming weeks – this is where you will find newsletters, the Representative list, resources and key pieces of work from the SECN Alliance.

Additional communication tools, including social media engagement, will also be explored to further strengthen visibility and connection.

Looking Back

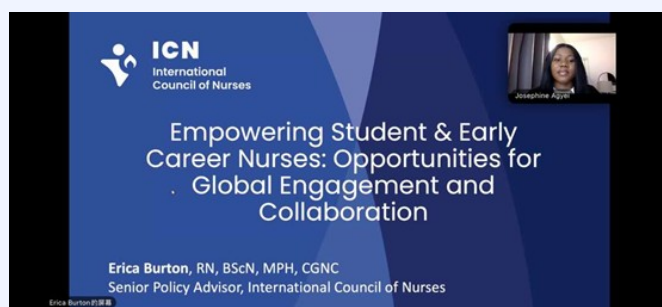
- The Alliance held its first in-person meeting on 10 June 2025, in Helsinki, alongside the ICN 2025 Congress, where Representatives from more than 50 countries across all six WHO regions met, both onsite and virtually, for the very first time. During this meeting, members supported the development of the SECN Alliance's workplan, explored opportunities for joint initiatives, and exchanged their hopes and expectations for the SECN Alliance's future direction. This meeting reaffirmed our shared commitment to advancing global nursing leadership.





- The SECN Alliance co-hosted the UHC Day Youth Workshop, helping ensure that the perspectives of student and early career nurses were represented in discussions on universal health coverage.

- SECN Alliance Representatives attended the seminar Empowering Students and Early Career Nurses: Opportunities for Global Engagement and Collaboration, hosted by the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing Center for Global Initiatives and the Global Alliance for Nursing and Midwifery. During the session, Representatives explored how nursing perspectives shape global health priorities, gained insights into participating in international policy dialogues, and identified strategies for translating clinical experience into effective advocacy.



Upcoming Activities & Events

Our workplan will keep us very busy in 2026!

We will continue to continue to lay the foundation for the success of the SECN Alliance including building the digital community, mapping SECN bodies, onboarding new Representatives, collaborating with ICN NNAs to grow the SECN Alliance.

We will be developing and delivering several key initiatives including:

- Host virtual policy forum for ICN SECN Alliance Representatives

- Host two webinars in 2026 for the ICN SECN Alliance webinar series – please watch for the invitation to join
- Prepare and host SECN virtual delegation as part of ICN virtual delegation to World Health Assembly
- Publish ICN SECN Alliance policy document on priority topic
- Contribute the SECN perspective to ICN's annual International Nurse's Day (IND) resource
- Collaborate on ICN-led nursing education projects
- Develop a global SECN advocacy & policy toolkit

The SECN Alliance will expand its collaborative reach by partnering with International Federation of Medical student associations, and International Pharmaceutical Students Federation to promote interdisciplinary learning, shared advocacy, and a richer global health dialogue.

ICN SECN Alliance Representative Activities

We are excited to share key activities and contributions of ICN SECN Alliance Representatives, including their engagement in policy discussions, collaborative initiatives, capacity-building efforts, and representation of student and early-career nurses at national, regional, and global levels.

Hyomin Kim - Korean Nurses Association

The Next-generation Nursing-leader Federation (NNF), soon to be renamed the “Korean Nursing Student Council”, is the official national student body under the Korean Nursing Association (KNA), representing nursing students across Korea. Comprising over 700 students from 16 city and provincial branches, the organization plans and carries out various student-led initiatives to raise awareness and promote engagement with nursing and healthcare-related policies. At the national level, the Steering Committee includes five people: the National President, the National Vice President, the Head of 'Director of Planning', the Head of 'Director of Policy', and the Head of 'Director of Public Relations'. We have regional branches in 16 cities and provinces, each with a Regional President, Regional Vice President, and directors for Planning, Policy, and Public Relations. Each regional branch is run by the respective City and Provincial Nurses Association. The five members of the Steering Committee and the 16 Regional Presidents hold voting rights in the Assembly of Representatives, where major decisions concerning the federation are made. The National President and National Vice President can be elected from among the Regional Presidents. The heads of each department (Planning, Policy, and Public Relations) are elected from among the regional directors within their respective departments.



Idah Msimuko - Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi

This year, our student chapter faced significant challenges due to a lack of sponsorship, which impacted our planned activities. Despite this, we remained resilient and organized three major fundraising walks across Malawi, successfully raising 4 million kwacha. The funds directly benefited 21 nursing students from various colleges and universities.

Additionally, we sold sweets, caps, and t-shirts to support the operations of our organization. We also conducted vital signs checks at local malls, combining community service with fundraising efforts to assist needy nursing students.



Ankur Patel - Canadian Nurses Association

"Across Canada, nursing students are driving change with heart, leadership, and vision. Through the Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA), they are not just preparing to join the profession, they are shaping its future."

This year, CNSA launched [Nursing Students' Voices](#), a national blog written entirely by nursing students. It has quickly become a space of honesty, reflection, and connection, where students share stories about

advocacy, resilience, and belonging. From confronting discrimination in clinical settings to leading campus mental health campaigns, these stories highlight the courage and compassion that define nursing education in Canada today.

CNSA also celebrated a milestone international collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Mexican Nursing Students' Association. This partnership builds bridges between two nations' future nurses, creating opportunities for shared research, cultural exchange, and cross-border advocacy. It marks a historic step toward greater North American collaboration in nursing leadership and education.

Within Canada, CNSA's Regional Showcase has brought visibility to the inspiring work happening in every province and territory. Students have led community vaccination drives, developed peer-support programs for clinical placement stress, and hosted local symposiums on Indigenous health, sustainability, and equity. Each initiative reminds us that nursing students are innovators and advocates within their own communities.

CNSA is also advancing governance renewal and strategic planning (2025–2030) to ensure that its national leadership reflects the students it serves; transparent, inclusive, and future-focused. This process will strengthen the Association's ability to represent and empower nursing students across diverse programs and regions.

Looking ahead, excitement is building for the 2026 CNSA National Conference in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan — “Building Bridges in the City of Bridges.” This event will bring together students, educators, and international partners to celebrate collaboration, creativity, and the collective power of student leadership.

From local classrooms to international forums, nursing students in Canada are showing the world what's possible when passion meets purpose. Through advocacy, education, and partnership, they continue to lead with the compassion and courage that define our profession.”

CNSA president, Opeyemi Kehinde, joined the board of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions in addressing violence in the workplace and presenting to health ministers of every province.



Oscar Andres Rojas Gallardo - Chilean Nurses Association

The National Nursing Students Union of Chile (Federación Nacional de Estudiantes de Enfermería de Chile, FENEECh), alongside the Santiago de Chile University (USACH) organized the “Olimpiadas de Enfermería”

on October 25, 2025 (this year we held the 25th version). This event was a restoration of the traditional yearly nursing student olympics, a national sports event, that aims to bring nursing students from all over Chile to bond and connect with each other through sports. This tradition had been suspended since 2019 due to national and global contingencies, although it made a comeback this year thanks to the work of the organizing team and FENEECh's directors board/steering committee.

The games were attended by eight nursing schools across the country, approximately 100 students attended in total, the atmosphere was great, and the interactions between students were nice, advancing relations between students from different regions.

The National Kinesiology Students Union (Federación Nacional de estudiantes de Kinesiología, FENEK) supported the event, offering warmups, physiotherapy in between sets, and tending to possible accidents alongside our nursing team.

The return of this event marked an important milestone for the nursing student community in Chile, reaffirming the values of teamwork, solidarity, and wellbeing that define our profession. Beyond the competition itself, the event fostered meaningful connections among students from different regions and strengthened collaboration across disciplines. This successful revival reflects the collective commitment of FENEECh and its partners to continue building spaces that promote unity, leadership, and the holistic development of nursing students nationwide.



Chih-min Ko - Taiwan Nurses Association

The Taiwan Nurses Association has established a Youth Nurse Committee to ensure that the voices of early-career nurses are represented within the NNA. Since 2024, the committee has been responsible for organizing several activities, including the Nursing Students Forum (March), the Youth Nursing Forum (November), and the International Affairs Learning Workshop (November).

Many early-career nurses participated in these forums and engaged in meaningful discussions with nursing educators and supervisors on issues such as nursing workforce retention, workload, mental health support, and other challenges currently faced by young nurses.



Mahbuba Afrin - Bangladesh

In November I visited Dhaka Nursing College to meet with 4th-year BScN students, who are also student leaders from their Student Welfare Organization. During our discussion, I shared information about the ICN SECN Alliance and its global initiatives.

We have also identified a few priority areas where gaps exist to focus our efforts: Research funding and mentorship support; Standardization of the nursing curriculum; Nursing advocacy at the policy level; Teacher training programs (based on subject and department).



Ali Al Qalaf - Kuwait Nursing Association

Over the past academic year, Ali has played a distinguished and pioneering role in advancing nursing leadership, student engagement, and professional advocacy within Kuwait. His contributions extend across education, representation, accreditation, and national media presence marking a significant milestone for nursing students in the country.

He served as an Academic Student Consultant and was selected as one of the students interviewed by the ACEN Accreditation Committee during its visit to the College of Nursing. Ali's insights reflected student experiences with curriculum, clinical training, and academic support contributing to the overall institutional evaluation. Ali delivered multiple lectures to nursing students at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), College of Nursing, focusing on The Kuwait National Nursing Association (KNNA), ICN and ICN SECN Alliance. These lectures introduced students to the structure, mission, and global influence of nursing organizations, while emphasizing the importance of professional identity, membership engagement, and leadership development. Ali's sessions strengthened awareness of international nursing standards and encouraged students to see themselves as contributors to the global nursing community.



Lina Gurtler - German Nurses Association

Our Young Nurses Network within the German Nurses Association (DBfK) is divided into four regional groups. Each of them organizes an annual nursing congress for nursing students. On 5 November, the Young Nurses North-East held their congress in Berlin. It was a special honor and pleasure to welcome Howard Catton, CEO of the International Council of Nurses, as a guest. With his inspiring words, he enriched our congress and encouraged young nurses to stay committed to our profession, even amid today's global challenges.



Agatha Faltstrom - Swedish Association of Health Professionals (Vårdförbundet)

Sweden: Honoring Excellence in Clinical Supervision

Adifete “Addi” Jahiri, a nurse at Havsbris Care Home in Malmö, Sweden was recently named *Student Supervisor of the Year 2025* by the Swedish Association of nursing students (Vårdförbundet Student.) The award celebrates her outstanding ability to guide nursing students during their clinical placements, creating a safe and inclusive learning environment where students feel seen, supported, and encouraged to grow.

Addi’s approach to supervision is rooted in respect, collaboration, and joy. Students describe her as someone who welcomes them into the team, encourages initiative, and fosters confidence. Her dedication reflects the values of Swedish nursing education where practical learning and human connection go hand in hand. The award highlights the vital role supervisors play in shaping the next generation of nurses. Addi received a prize of 25,000 SEK and, most importantly, heartfelt recognition from the students she has helped grow.



Wellness Corner

Preventing Burnout

Burnout often appears gradually through emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, difficulty concentrating, or feeling detached from studies, patients, or daily tasks. For students and early career nurses, these symptoms can be intensified by irregular schedules, performance pressure, and limited downtime.

Practical Strategies to Reduce Burnout:

- **Set boundaries:** Protect study-free or work-free time to recharge mentally and physically. This helps prevent the “always on” feeling many students and early career nurses experience.
- **Prioritize rest:** Even short breaks deep breathing, stretching, or stepping outside can interrupt the buildup of stress. Aim for consistent sleep patterns whenever possible.
- **Stay connected:** Burnout grows in isolation. Share concerns with peers, mentors, or supervisors who can provide support or guidance.
- **Break large tasks into smaller steps:** Reduces overwhelm and helps maintain motivation during demanding academic or clinical periods.
- **Engage in reflective practice:** Journaling or debriefing after tough days can help process emotions and restore a sense of purpose.

When to Reach Out for Support:

If burnout signs persist or begin to affect your performance, mood, or health, it's important to seek help early. Campus wellness centers, counseling services, peer support groups, and employee assistance programs are all valuable resources for students and early career nurses.

Taking care of yourself is not optional it is the foundation of strong, compassionate nursing practice.

CALL TO ACTION

Get involved, stay connected, and help strengthen our growing community of students and early career nurses. Your voice and participation make a real difference.

How to Get Involved

Share your insights, activities, brief reflections, and local initiatives, including photos or updates, by emailing them to the Alliance's email secn@icn.ch for potential inclusion in future newsletters. Participate in discussion groups, virtual meetups, or mentorship circles to exchange experiences and support fellow students and early career nurses.

Stay Connected

Encourage fellow students and early-career nurses to stay updated on SECN activities through the ICN website and to stay connected by contacting us at secn@icn.ch

Your participation helps build a strong, collaborative, and supportive environment for students and early career nurses everywhere.

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 140 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.

www.icn.ch

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