

Karen Mazerolle of New Brunswick has been awarded the COHNA/ACIIST Award of Excellence in 2015

Karen began her occupational nursing career in 2001 at a manufacturing plant in New Brunswick. She worked diligently with Work Safe New Brunswick (WSNB), company managers and employees to implement a safety program that reduced injury rates by 76% within 5 years. In 2011 and 2012, the same manufacturing company received recognition from the Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick primarily due to a variety of wellness initiatives Karen had implemented.

In 2004, Karen joined NBOHNG/RIISTNB and has served as Treasurer, President, & Vice-President. She has been very active in promoting educational opportunities for occupational health nursing both provincially and nationally. In 2004, Karen presented at the COHNA/ACIIST New Brunswick Education Day, speaking on the successes in her workplace resulting in improved health and safety of workers and reduced injury rates. She served on the WSNB conference planning committee from 2009 to 2014 and was a presenter at this annual conference in 2004, 2010 and 2012. Karen acquired COHN(C) certification from the Canadian Nurses Association in 2011. In 2014, New Brunswick hosted the COHNA-ACIIST Annual Meeting and a two day Workplace Wellness Solutions Conference for health care providers. Karen served on the planning committee which profiled nationally recognized speakers and resulted in a successful and profitable conference. This was a significant achievement given the planning committee was small and each member contributed considerable time and energy over 18 months to ensure success.

Karen volunteered on the COHNA-ACIIST Board of Directors as the New Brunswick Director from 2008-2013. She took on the role of Vice President in 2009-2010 and served as President in 2010-2012. Under Karen's leadership as President several innovative achievements were accomplished such as updating the National Standards for Disability Management for Occupational Health Nurses, creating a celebration week specifically for Occupational Health Nurses, establishing the COHNA/ACIIST list serve to provide a national forum for the exchange of ideas and concerns for Occupational Health Nurses, helping design the new COHNA/ACIIST logo, updating the COHNA-ACIIST history book and ensuring a financial audit was completed for 2006 to 2012. Karen enhanced the visibility and transparency of COHNA-ACIIST by improving communication to members through President Updates, emails and ensuring minutes and activities were posted on the website. Karen showed incredible leadership navigating COHNA-ACIIST through a difficult phase when relationships became strained with a provincial association.

Karen has made outstanding contributions to Occupational Health Nursing on the frontlines, locally, provincially and nationally. It is hard to believe she has accomplished so much since becoming an Occupational Health Nurse in 2001! Now is the time for COHNA-ACIIST to recognize one of its strongest leaders with a vision that has shaped our future as a national organization!

