

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I was shocked and dismayed to read the editorial "Playing It Shrewd, Not Shrill" (*Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 22(4), 1-3). While concerned about the paucity of research funding for nursing research, Dr. Pringle implies we should be nice about this and bide our time. Apparently, when our home-grown doctoral students mature, research funding will conveniently appear.

With all due respect, Dr. Pringle's position does not consider the needs of an already strong cadre of nurse researchers in Canada. Many of these nurse researchers conduct research as an integral part of their academic appointments; some are employed full-time by health care institutions, and a few conduct research as career scientists and scholars. All require funding.

No one can deny that nurses are well prepared to do research. No one can deny that nursing research could make a significant and vital contribution to health care. No one can deny that nursing research is disproportionately underfunded.

Without adequate funding, nursing research becomes a laborious task, with the principal investigator filling multiple roles - research assistant, secretary and gopher. Without adequate funding, "feasibility" is defined by the dollar, rather than the research question, with the research design, sample size, number of variables, or type of analysis downscaled. Feasibility becomes a question of fitting research to financial constraints, such as available equipment and space (neither of which we have). Some research is simply out of the question, such as prospective studies or ethology, which are too costly or require special equipment, or research requiring a wet lab. And as our research is downscaled, nursing research loses credence with the scientific community. Nursing research is considered trivial enough to be ignored.

It is time to become advocates for ourselves, for the quality of our practice, for the development of our profession, and for the health of all Canadians. It is time to take responsibility for this inequity. It is time to speak forcefully and articulately on this issue. It is time to let our government know that this situation cannot continue.

It is not shrewd to be silent; we must be shrill.

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