



## **BOD Nomination for Western Region**

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**Ethan Whitehead, MHM, BScN, RN ENC(C)**  
***Vancouver, BC***

*Nominated by Mary Sheffer, Dartmouth, NS*

### **Tell us why you are seeking a Board of Director position**

I am applying for the Western Region seat on the CACCN Board of Directors to contribute my experience as a Critical Care Nursing Officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, a pediatric emergency nurse, and a PhD student in Nursing. My career has spanned intensive care, neonatal critical care, emergency, rural practice, and aeromedical evacuation, providing me with a broad perspective on the challenges and opportunities in critical care nursing. I am committed to advancing CACCN's mission through education, research, and advocacy, and to ensuring that the voices of critical care nurses in Western Canada are strongly represented.

### **CACCN / Volunteer Involvement**

Since 2015, I have volunteered with St. John Ambulance in progressively responsible roles. From 2017 to 2023, I served as the Mass Gathering Event Supervisor for Alberta, where I coordinated first aid coverage for every major event managed by St. John Ambulance, including the 2018 Grey Cup in Edmonton and the Papal visit in 2022. In recognition of my contributions during the Fort McMurray Wildfire response, I received the Vice Prior Vote of Thanks in 2017. The following year, I was honoured to be inducted as a Member of the Order

of St. John. I am currently serving as the Division Nursing Officer for the Vancouver Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade in British Columbia, where I provide mentorship and clinical oversight to volunteers while supporting the delivery of high-quality first aid services.

## **Personal Statement**

My name is Ethan, and it is an honour to be considered for the Western Region seat on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association of Critical Care Nurses (CACCN). With more than a decade of experience as a Registered Nurse in both military and civilian healthcare, I bring a perspective that bridges clinical practice, leadership, and academic inquiry. I am passionate about advancing our profession through education, research, and advocacy, and I believe my background positions me to serve the membership and strengthen CACCN's national voice.

My career has spanned intensive care, neonatal critical care, paediatric and adult emergency, post-anaesthesia, rural practice, and aeromedical evacuation. As a Critical Care Nursing Officer in the Canadian Armed Forces, I have deployed in operational environments where adaptability, resilience, and teamwork were vital. When not deployed, I am embedded in the Intensive Care Unit and Trauma Bay at Vancouver General Hospital to ensure my clinical skills remain current and to contribute to the care of critically ill and injured patients. These combined experiences have deepened my understanding of the challenges critical care nurses face in both routine and extraordinary circumstances, and they reinforce my commitment to supporting our profession with strong leadership. Education has been central to my professional identity. I am an instructor in Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, Paediatric Advanced Life Support, Trauma Nursing Core Course, and the Advanced Military Trauma Resuscitation Program. In these roles, I have mentored nurses, physicians, and medics across diverse settings, fostering skill development and confidence in high-stakes environments. This reflects my dedication to CACCN's mission of engaging nurses through education and networking, and to the association's values of lifelong learning and professional growth.

Academically, I hold a Master of Health Management and am pursuing a PhD in Nursing at the University of British Columbia. My doctoral research focuses on moral injury in healthcare providers, particularly among military nurses and medics during the COVID-19 pandemic. This work reflects my belief in advancing nursing knowledge through research that informs practice and policy. My past academic contributions, including a published chapter on war ethics and soldiers' well-being, highlight my commitment to scholarship that bridges the clinical and ethical dimensions of care.

Beyond clinical and academic work, I have been recognized for leadership and service with honours such as the Emerging Leaders Award from McMaster University and the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal. My volunteer service with St. John Ambulance, where I

have been an Advanced Medical First Responder since 2015, further demonstrates my dedication to community service.

I seek this role to contribute my experience and passion to CACCN's mission. My diverse background—spanning frontline practice, interprofessional teaching, operational leadership, and academic research—aligns with the association's priorities of leadership, education, communication, research, and membership growth. Most importantly, I aim to ensure the voices of critical care nurses across Western Canada are heard and represented at the national level.