

## March message from ITNS President and co-founder Nancy L. Stitt, BSN RN

“It all began with a definite plan and a little luck of the Irish...”

So began the story of the International Society of Transplant Nurses (ITNS) at the opening of the first Annual ITNS Symposium on 12 March 1992 in Pittsburgh, PA. As co-founders of ITNS, Kandy Yarris-Newell and I kept a detailed record of our planning for ITNS—planning that began in 1989 and resulted in the launch of ITNS in 1992. We crafted a poem and slide show to share how ITNS came to be with over 300 attendees. “If you build it, they will come” became our mantra and come to Pittsburgh you did! It is a wonderful story and truly was a labor of love and passion for all things transplant, in particular a passion for transplant patient care. It’s inspiring to see that passion in all of you continuing as we move into our 25th year.

March 1992 was historic on many levels. Dr. Thomas Starzl was our first Symposium keynote speaker, Tom Burke—the first University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) liver transplant recipient to survive—was our first transplant recipient speaker, and Sabina DeGeest was our first international speaker. 1992 ushered in a year of growth and firsts for ITNS; a year of first brochures, bags, pins, board of directors, newsletters, chapters, patient education, and most importantly – members!

March 2016 begins an historic movement towards our 25th year of existence as a professional nursing organization. As the first ITNS president in 1992, and now the current president, it is an honor to launch our 25th year of ITNS. The 25th Annual ITNS Symposium will take place 14–16 October, once again in Pittsburgh. As ITNS members we are connected through the passion for transplant patient care and what better way to celebrate that passion than returning to our roots and uniting with colleagues in Pittsburgh for the 25th Annual ITNS Symposium, *Transplant Nursing: Bridging Passion, Practice and Patient Care!*

There is power in number. As more resources become available, goal attainment is enhanced and research and evidence-based practice is conducted, with patient-centered care as the end result. As we move into our 25th year, we encourage you to share your passion and help ITNS grow. Be a part of history. Bring a co-worker onboard as a member, join and participate in your local chapter, start a chapter if you don’t have a local one, participate with ITNS at the international level, submit to *ITNS Insider*, and attend the historic 25<sup>th</sup> Annual ITNS Symposium. Showcase your talent and passion! ITNS is here for both you and your patients!