

## NIS Nurses Establish Professional Associations

*By Sharon Weinstein, RN, CRNI, MS*

From Moldova to Kazakstan, creation of associations for nurses to exchange ideas and network professionally has become a priority. Because of this, developing new nursing associations and enhancing existing ones is a goal of the NIS Nursing Task Force this year. During last year's NIS Nursing Conference, nurses met to plan the organization of an NIS-wide, multidisciplinary Society of Educators of Nursing. The society is in its initial stage of operations; currently, officers are being appointed and by-laws are being drafted. Irina Bakhtina, Dean of the Postgraduate School of Nursing affiliated with the Medical Center in the Name of Sokolov, St. Petersburg, Russia, is chairwoman of the society's planning committee.

Goals of the society include:

- Completing the process of governmental approval of the standards for nursing education by NIS health ministries;
- Enhancing the system of continuous postgraduate nursing education in the NIS;
- Developing standards for nursing practice for implementation within the NIS healthcare system;
- Improving the process of certification and accreditation of nurses in the NIS;
- Implementing progressive methods of teaching at NIS educational institutions;
- Developing new textbooks and learning materials for nurses;
- Developing a bank of information resources in the field of nursing education;
- Developing research methodologies in nursing;
- Improving education programs for nurse-managers and educators of nursing; and
- Developing family practice nursing education programs and standards of practice.

The US-based Intravenous Nurses Society, Inc. and the Federation of Nursing Specialty Organizations will assist nursing societies in the NIS in developing membership and communication tools, such as newsletters and journals, and providing educational programs. They have also offered comprehensive plans for development of organizational by-laws, election of officers and budgeting. During a September NIS Nursing Task Force meeting in Kiev, Ukraine, representatives reported on the status of their nursing associations.

In Moldova, a medical assistants organization now exists with more than 15,000 members representing 32 regions. The group has a local bank account, an official stamp, and is registered with the Ministry of Health. It focuses on teaching and training of staff, student selection, diagnostic skills, and curriculum reforms. An independent newspaper, in which the society has a free page, serves as a communication tool.

The nursing society in L'viv, Ukraine is in its beginning stage, and is a part of the Association of Nurses of Ukraine. A new college for chief nurses has opened and postgraduate education is also being stressed.

In Almaty, Kazakstan, the Association of Medical Sisters, an organization independent of the partnership, has formed to upgrade nursing skills and disseminate training. In the city of Uralsk, the Association of Nurses of Kazakstan is also active.

A new professional society, the All Ukrainian Society of Psychiatric Nurses, began in Odessa, Ukraine in December 1996. The goal of the City of Odessa Nursing Association is to become a part of the Ukrainian Nurses Association.

The City Nurses Council in Kiev, Ukraine is currently active; its goal is to unite the membership and provide ongoing continuing education for nurses. They have invited oblast nursing groups to join them as they work within the framework of the national association. The City

Association of Nurses became a registered organization with elected officers at the end of 1996.

Minsk, Belarus recently hosted the Republican Conference of Nurses for potential members of the future national nursing association. Materials concerning development of an association have been disseminated and an organizing committee has been formed.

As nurses in the NIS proactively work to develop professional societies, AIHA and its NIS Nursing Task Force will continue to help foster and support these initiatives. They are part of a successful effort to elevate the status and skills of nurses across the NIS today and for the future.