

### Hearty support for healthy debate

The older I get, the more I recognize the value of a good debate. When members of the *Nursing2004* team meet to discuss our mission, projects, and goals (and yes, our sometimes-controversial covers), the exchanges can get pretty heated. Yet we always work out solutions, and nobody walks away mad. The give-and-take makes for a stimulating work environment, and I'm always learning something.



Debate is a powerful way to gain new insights and solve problems. True nurse leaders recognize the merit of deliberation and open forums. Unfortunately, some nursing environments don't support debate. Some even frown on it.

That's why *Nursing2004* has introduced a forum called *Issues in Nursing*. We hope you'll use it to share your thoughts on controversial or intriguing topics.

Many of you responded to our first two installments, which focused on men in nursing and staffing ratios, with amazing insight. Some, however, criticized us for including only voices of "experts and academics." True, we invite authorities and representatives of organizations that are involved in certain causes to speak out and get the ball rolling. But ultimately, our aim is to learn what you have to say.

This month, five nurses speak out about the realities of a restraint-free environment. (See "No Restraints Allowed: Legalities and Realities" on page 54.) Their opinions are well informed, but by no means the last word on the issue.

Academics and experts may have strong beliefs and interesting insights about various topics, but you, the nurses working with all kinds of patients, are dealing with realities, not theories. So, please, share your opinions by sending us a letter or e-mail message.

I hope your work environment stimulates your mind, engages your emotions, and values your perspective. But even if you're forced to stifle your opinions at work, you have a wonderful opportunity to share them here with other nurses.

Start talking. You, your patients, and your colleagues can only gain from the dialogue.



Cheryl L. Mee, RN, BC, MSN  
Editor-in-Chief, *Nursing2004*

Our editorial staff reviews each letter and e-mail message you send us. Please write to tell us how we're doing and what we can do better. Drop us a line at [cmeel@lww.com](mailto:cmeel@lww.com).

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