**PERSONAL MESSAGE AND GREETINGS FROM**
**Graham Whitmarsh, Deputy Minister**


**National Nursing Week, May 6-12, 2013**


On behalf of the Ministry of Health, I would like to extend my best wishes to all nurses in British Columbia as you celebrate National Nursing Week.

As you begin celebrations, I would like to take time to reflect on, and honour, the contributions and leadership of the dedicated, knowledgeable, capable and caring nurses who strive each day to provide safe, quality care in BC.

With this year's theme, *Nurses – A Leading Force for Change,* it is especially noteworthy to acknowledge the important and crucial roles that nurses, from every corner of this province, play in helping British Columbians stay healthy and receive the care they need when recovering from illness or surgery, managing chronic illness, or when care is needed at the beginning or end of life. I commend the amazing contributions each and every nurse has made in leading new and better approaches to improve the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of health services for the citizens and health care system in BC. Nurses are a vital member of the health care team and will always have a pivotal role in collaboratively leading and influencing our progressive and changing health care landscape.

In today's health care environment, excellence in patient care requires creative, collaborative leadership. Nurses have a long history of promoting multi-disciplinary partnerships and collaborative approaches to managing change. As a respected part of the largest group of health care practitioners, I applaud the many and very significant contributions nurses make to individuals, families and community health in BC today. National Nursing Week provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate nurses, and to recognize professional dedication, leadership and excellence.

The Ministry is deeply appreciative of nurses' contributions to health care – truly a leading force for change. I wish you all the best as you celebrate National Nursing Week.