This year is already racing by. Nurses Week (May 6-12) is right around the corner and many of you will be participating in activities at your facilities. The American Nurses Association (ANA) has designated 2017 as the Year of the Healthy Nurse: Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation. You can go to their website to find a toolkit with some important points (http://www.nursingworld.org/yearofhealthynurse). Here are some of the facts you may be able to appreciate as medical-surgical nurses.

Nurses are the largest group of workers in the U.S. healthcare system (3.6 million of us). Therefore, our health is important to the health of patients and the productivity of the system as a whole. However, ANA’s health risk appraisal indicated nurses’ health is suffering. We tend to be overweight with an average body mass index of 28; we get about an hour less sleep every night than the average American (12% said they nodded off while driving in the past month); we eat a lower percentage of fruits and vegetables per day than average. We also report markedly higher levels of stress; nurses report 81% stress while the average American reports 29% stress. Furthermore, less than half of us perform the recommended amount and time of muscle strengthening exercises.

Many factors contribute to nurses’ health issues, with many of them being work environment issues: workplace stress (82%), heavy lifting (42%), prolonged standing (37%), sharps injuries (35%), bloodborne pathogens (33%), and violence at work (21%), among others.

**Mind, Body, and Spirit**

Goals of the ANA campaign are to (a) engage nurses at individual, organizational, and interpersonal levels; (b) improve their health in five areas: activity, rest, nutrition, quality of life, and safety; and (c) create a healthy nurse population. These are lofty but not impossible goals. In keeping with these goals, ANA has aligned the Nurses Week theme Nursing: The Balance of Mind, Body, & Spirit with the Year of the Healthy Nurse Campaign.

I can relate personally to some of the statistics provided by the ANA. I know how hard medical-surgical nurses work, often leaving their own health as the last priority after their patients and families. The ANA thus has created a calendar with monthly themes that include written information, webinars, and monthly goals (see Table 1). For example, in April the focus is on combating stress; May is “National Fitness and Sports Month.” The information provided also can be used with your co-workers, families, patients, and communities. The final premise of the ANA campaign is that if nurses are healthy, we can serve as better role models, health educators, and advocates.

I wish all of you a happy and healthy Nurses Week. Even if we each pick only one focus, such as stress reduction or exercise, small gains individually can become large gains for us as a workforce!