ANI Innovator Profile

Omaha System
Interview with Karen S. Martin, RN, MSN, FAAN
Health Care Consultant, Contributor, Omaha System
www.omahasystem.org

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The Alliance for Nursing Informatics (ANI) is a collaboration of organizations that represents more than 6,000 nurse informaticists and brings together 33 distinct nursing informatics groups globally.

Mission: To advance NI leadership, practice, education, policy and research through a unified voice of nursing informatics organizations.

Vision: Transform health and health care through nursing informatics and innovation.

ANI Innovator Profiles Program
The purpose of this program is to capture an ANI Innovator Profile for each ANI member organization to increase awareness and visibility of ANI members and describe how they contribute to a unified voice for nursing informatics.

ANI Innovator Profile – Omaha System

Interview with Karen S. Martin, RN, MSN, FAAN

I am pleased to introduce Karen Martin, Health Care Consultant and Contributor for the Omaha System. Welcome, Karen.

1. **Can you please tell us about yourself and the career path that led you to become a leader at the Omaha System?**

   I began my career in Community Health but after a few years I decided to pursue graduate school at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Nursing. After I graduated in 1978, I led an Omaha System research team at the Visiting Nurses Association of Omaha where I worked until 1993. At that time, I took a leap of faith and developed an independent practice. Moving forward to 2001, I became the Omaha System Board of Directors Chair, I co-chair the Omaha System Conference and am the lead contributor to the Omaha System website.

I also am heavily invested in writing for publication conducting workshops, and providing consultation. I have had the privilege to be a visiting scholar in more than 20 countries to share my knowledge and insight.

2. **What is the primary mission of Omaha System?**

   The mission of the Omaha System is to improve the quality of practice, documentation, and information management. We also seek to support standardized terminologies in general. We emphasize to our community the need to maintain the integrity of the Omaha System terms, definitions and coding so we can ensure that the terminology is being used consistently and accurately.

3. **How many members do you currently have?**

   The Omaha System has more than 2500 members.

4. **What projects is your organization working on to advance informatics and innovation in healthcare?**

   The Omaha System is engaged in a variety of activities to advance informatics and innovation in healthcare. For instance, we host the Omaha System International Conference every two years to share knowledge about improving practice, education, and research; using electronic health records; and exchanging health information. We schedule Omaha System Basic Workshops regularly throughout the country. In addition, a number of community members assist other members to write for publication.

   Lastly, the Omaha System Board of Directors is engaged and active in advancing informatics. For example, at the *2014 Big Data Nursing Knowledge: Big Data & Science for Transforming Health Care Conference*, a Board member, Bonnie Westra, PhD, RN, FAAN, FACMI, led the conference and another Board member, Karen Monsen, PhD, RN, FAAN, shared the big data research she is conducting globally.

5. **What value do you see in being an ANI member?**

   ANI is a fabulous communication tool. For example, the ANI Governing Directors meetings allow for the opportunity to collaborate and learn new information that I can bring back to the Omaha System Community members.

   In addition, by bringing together such a diverse group, we are able to come together and combine efforts to influence policy and stand together to support our mission and values and provide a collective voice for nursing.

6. **In what way(s) is your organization supporting ANI Initiatives e.g. the [ANI consumer pledge](#), ANI Comments & Testimony, the Emerging Leader program, etc.?**

   One way that the Omaha System continues to support ANI Initiatives is by providing announcements through our listserv, workshops, and International Conference. In regards to the ANI Comments & Testimony, I seek to engage the Omaha System Board members and our Community members to submit their comments. One of our Board members, Karen Utterback, RN, MSN, testified at ONC recently.

7. What is your organization's vision for the future of nursing informatics?
The Omaha System hopes to see that all people in practice consider informatics as an integral part of their practice and realize the ability it has to improve the quality of care. I have witnessed this personally through the Omaha System many times but I would like to see this occur on a global scale.

In addition, I want accurate and consistent aggregate data used for diverse purposes. More data and trends need to be shared with clinicians, and for surveys, accreditation, various reports, and funding. This is important with Big Data and sharing data across vendor systems.

Lastly, I would like to see practice, education, and research become more integrated. I can personally say that the Omaha System's best geographic areas are where practice, education, and research work together in a collaborative environment. We need this to occur more consistently across the healthcare industry for the benefit of the general public.

8. Do you have any additional comments to share?
My only comment is that that our Omaha System Community is proud to be a part of the Alliance for Nursing Informatics.

Biography for Karen S. Martin, RN, MSN, FAAN
Karen S. Martin, RN, MSN, FAAN is a Health Care Consultant in private practice and is based in Omaha, Nebraska, USA. She works with diverse healthcare providers, educators, researchers, and software developers nationally and globally. Prior to her current role, Karen was the principal investigator of Omaha System research at the Visiting Nurse Association of Omaha (1978-1993).

Karen is the lead contributor of the Omaha System web site, chair of the Omaha System Board of Directors, and co-chair of the Omaha System International Conferences. She is the author of more than 100 articles and chapters, 6 books, and 70 editorials, and is on the review panels of *Nursing Outlook, Public Health Nursing*, and *CIN: Computers, Informatics, Nursing*. Karen has conducted more than 450 workshops and speeches, and has been a visiting scholar and speaker in 21 countries.

Recorded: August 26, 2014

For the full interview recording you can click here or visit http://www.allianceni.org/members.asp