

Operating Room Nurses of Alberta Association

Summer 2017



In Memory

Muriel Shewchuk

By Barbara Mushayandebvu

It is with a heavy heart I write this article in remembrance of Muriel. Muriel passed away on the 11th of May.

Muriel was one of the founding members of the Operating Room Nurses of Alberta Association (ORNAA) and indeed ORNAC. She was also instrumental in writing the first standards for perioperative practice with her good friend Gloria Stephens. She

was an outstanding educator, administrator and mentor to many in the perioperative world. She was a fierce advocate for patient safety and nurse education. This was demonstrated many a times when she was director of surgical services for the then Calgary Health Region. She found funds to send as many nurses to various conferences and paid for those who did certification in perioperative nursing through CNA. She closed rooms to allow nurses to attend ORNAC and provincial conferences.

Those of us at the ORNAC conference in Niagara had a wonderful time with Muriel, not knowing this was her last hurrah. What a special time this now is. I am grateful to have had that opportunity and also to have been able to tell her in person how her life influenced mine. I am so blessed to have had Muriel as a mentor, who encouraged and pushed me to be the best OR registered nurse. I am where I am today because of her.

The perioperative world has lost one of its champions. But it is also the loss of a mother, grandmother, sister or colleague. Her legacy will live on through the many whose lives she touched.

Rest in peace Muriel.



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After obtaining my Peri-Operative Nurse Certification in 2008, I have worked as a peri-operative nurse for nine years. I worked one year in the Halifax Infirmary on the cardiac surgery team, and the rest of the time in the Red Deer Operating Room. Having spent many years working with Lana, I feel that I can use the award in a way that would honor her, as well as her passion and dedication for peri-operative nursing.

I am seeking the award to apply towards the registration fees to write the CPN(C) exam. I have been interested in obtaining this certification for numerous years, and this award would help me accomplish this goal. I strive to continually increase my knowledge and skills in the area of peri-operative nursing. I feel this certification would help me to grow personally as well as professionally. I would like to demonstrate that I can provide patients with the highest standard of care during their peri-operative experience.

I am passionate about peri-operative nursing because I feel it is an area of health care in which we can make a drastic difference in the quality of people's lives. From joint replacements, to removing cancer, to repairing fractures, the end result provides dramatic changes. It is an area of nursing in which I feel I can make a big impact to the patients and their families. I am also passionate about gaining knowledge and improving my practice. I enjoy my career as a peri-operative nurse as I am given the chance to continually learn and grow. Each day is a new learning experience with new cases and new situations. I also learn as I work within the multi-disciplinary team and engage in health related conversations pertaining to the current surgery in progress.

The CPN (c) exam is just one way in which I would like to continue to grow as a peri-operative nurse. I am a CORNA member, and look forward to attending the Spring Workshop in March. I also look forward to having the opportunity to attend other conferences and workshops, such as the fall ORNAA conference, or other conferences around the country. The weekly in-services are beneficial to maintaining certifications and staying updated on events and changes around the OR, and I attend as many as possible. I will continue to seek out new and different opportunities to grow as a peri-operative nurse.



What is a SMART committee?

SMART (Specific-Measurable-Assignable-Reasonable-Timely) is a multi-collaborative committee that promotes operational safety and quality to staff, physicians and patients. This committee had a representative from, Department Manager, Anesthesia, Surgeon, Department Unit Manager, and Nursing, Respiratory therapy, Surgical Processor, Health care aid, Unit clerk and Environmental Services.

The objective of the SMART committee is identifying any operational improvements for the surgical suites, receives information and suggestions on improvements from any member from the surgical suites team. They also recommend and develop improvements for the surgical suite. This committee does not deal with human resource issues or complaints towards specific services or personnel.

Some examples of changes made by the committee are, signs on each theatre door for completed terminal cleaning. A logbook was created for housekeeping to complete every day for each theatre which also meet compliance for accreditation. It was also decided to have patient sent to the PACU block area on nights instead of the holding area if we have multiply cases. There are only 2 nursing staff on nights and the patient cannot be monitored if in the holding area while the staff set up the case and can be a safety issue.

SMART committee also took on a project for delays on start times during elective cases. It looked at patients being ready by day surgery, block area, surgeons/anesthesia/nursing staff being on time.

In closing the SMART committee is here for the safety of both patients and staff.

Submitted by

Christa Gibson R.N CPN(c)

Upcoming Events

ORNAA 2018

Provincial Conference

I'm A Nurse: What's Your Superpower?

September 19-22, 2018

SCORNA

Organ Donation After Cardiocirculatory Death, Determination of Death in Southern Alberta: A Paradigm Shift

General Dinner Meeting
June 15, 2017. Big Rock Brewery.

ORNAA AGM

October 19, 2017,

Multi-location Event

ORNAA.org for room listings

Improving the experience for sexual and gender diverse (LGBTQ) people by Marni Panas, Senior Advisor AHS Employee Relations

SNIPS & SNAP

Next publication deadline is November 15, 2017



2017 ORNAA AWARDS

Nominate a deserving colleague today



Snips & Snaps Writing Awards

- First Place Scholarly Paper \$500
- Five Additional Paper \$250/ Each
- Special Article (Poem, Personal Reflection) \$250

ORNAA.org

Promising Star Award

One award per district per year

NEW ORNAA PRESIDENT

This June Darlene Rikley completed her term as ORNAA president and Rana Sleiman of NCORNA became the new ORNAA president.

Thank you Darlene for all your work during your term!

Pictured is, Left: Darlene Rikley, Right: Rana Sleiman



Knowledge Is Power

*Lauren Llewellyn RN, BScN
SCORNA President
Staff RN at South Health Campus, Calgary*

Experiencing and harnessing the power of the Falls

Another ORNAC conference has come and gone as quickly as the water flows over the Niagara Falls. It is difficult to look back and determine whether more information or more laughter was exchanged over the week at the 25th ORNAC National Conference: Harnessing our Power. It was not difficult to see that this very dilemma would be present throughout the week, based on the caliber of the speakers that were chosen by the planning committee.

We started the week off with an electric buzz filling the theatre for the opening ceremonies and keynote speaker. Our Keynote speaker, Meg Soper, actively got the room involved in easy ice breakers that would soon help us to see the generational discrimination we inadvertently portray in our health care teams. Through her dynamic presentation, Meg helped the delegates to find the good in each of the generations and how to change our perspectives to enable us to work more coherently as a team. We were also treated to a presentation by Dr. Peter Papadakos, who spoke on the increase in electronic distraction and how it affects patient safety and inter-professional communication. One of the main points of his presentation discussed the decrease in the ability of the population to have meaningful conversations face to face rather than over a device.

Over the next couple of days, there was an underlying theme in many of the concurrent sessions: Safety. It is no surprise that patient safety and the ways in which we, as operating room nurses, could attain it were discussed in multiple facets. From the assessment for DVTs and their prophylaxis, to patient positioning simulations, to protocols for debriefing after critical incidents; these are but a few examples of the

presentations which I was present at and able to participate. The delegates of this ORNAC conference were given the honor of recalling the Fort McMurray fire evacuation and how the team ensured that patients from the hospital made it to safety. That was a very proud moment for our members from Alberta.



As this was a monumental conference year, it only made sense that we were gifted with a presentation by two of our founding members, Gloria Stephens and the late Muriel Shewchuk. Without these ladies, I feel that we as a nursing profession would not be where we are today. It was through many hours sitting around each other's dinner tables that the ORNAC standards and the idea of an association for perioperative nurses was born. I am in awe of how much has progressed, in terms of the ORNAC standards, over the years. Following this presentation, we had the members of the current standards committee review the changes that have been made to the current standards, including: formatting, sections added, level of review and research referencing.

Although it may seem as though it was all learning, we had many opportunities to socialize and

network with other perioperative nurses and industry partners from across the country. We enjoyed an entertaining evening dressed to the nines in our 20s/flapper inspired outfits and dancing the Charleston. The delegates were also gifted with an incredible appreciation evening at the falls, with food and laughter a plenty. There was no doubt in my mind that we are appreciated by the ORNAC organization and our industry partners.

The conference finished with the closing keynote speaker, Mark Black. He was there to remind us that although we have policies and procedures to follow, to not forget about your personal mission statement. Every decision that we make while at work impacts other human beings. Mark asked us to consider these five points: Focus on destiny instead of disease; choose principles over policies; don't underestimate the impact that a smile on our face has for our patients; choose to be a human being before a health care provider; and to figure out why you are doing what you are doing instead of focusing solely on the task.

Overall, my experience at the 25th ORNAC National Conference has left a lasting impression on me. I return to work with conviction to do the best that I can in creating a safe environment for myself, my co-workers, and my patients. With this fire burning, I eagerly look forward to the next national conference being held in Halifax, NS in 2019. I encourage as many people to start planning to attend and if it requires fundraising to get you there, take that step...you will not regret it.

*Lauren Llewellyn RN, BScN
SCORNA President
Staff RN at South Health Campus, Calgary*



The Power of a Perioperative Nurse: A Super Power some could say...

Written by Sarah Walcer RN, B.Sc.N. CPN (C)

U of S, College of Nursing, Class of 2005.

Like many of you, I fell in love with the idea of Perioperative Nursing from my very first exposure to surgery in nursing school. My very first observation period proved very emotional and life changing. I remember watching a Mastectomy being performed and thinking about the patient's experiences. What a complete life change and how stressful and heavy the weight of the world must feel on her shoulders. I remember watching the power of the Perioperative Nurse and how she was able to reassure the patient and provide a shoulder to help carry the patient's burden. I remember watching the patient's face calm and ease as she went to sleep, holding onto the Nurses' hand and staring into her eyes. I thought this moment was one of the most profound things I had ever experienced as a young 18 year old Nursing student. As surgery progressed, I remember watching the patient's chest being exposed, prepped and then carefully draped. I watched eagerly as the precision and the dance of surgery unfolded. The scrub Nurse approached the surgical field with such delicately planned and anticipated instruments. The surgeon made the first careful press of the blade into the patient's skin and the first trickle of blood was unlike anything I had ever seen in my young life thus far. I felt myself get suddenly hot and my legs were not as steady as they once were with my naïve confidence. I did not faint, but I knew this was a defining moment in my life. I had felt so emotionally connected to this patient and I couldn't believe that I, a young Nursing student, could be a spectator to surely one of this patient's biggest life events. I caught myself deep in thought and asking, "Who am I to be standing here, watching such a personal experience?" "Why should I be allowed into this delicate process and what did I do to be allowed so intimately into this woman's reality?" As I contemplated my worthiness to be present, I further watched the dance between the scrub Nurse and surgeon. I was in awe of the flow between their hands working together. The scrub Nurse anticipating the surgeon's next step, handing and receiving instruments like a

delicately choreographed dance. It was truly awe inspiring to me as a Nursing student. I just kept wondering how the scrub Nurse knew before she was asked by the surgeon and how she had instruments ready before the surgeon extended her hand. The scrub Nurse displayed knowledge, confidence and an intense passion for her responsibility in surgery and dedication to the patient. How can one simple look be so powerful and how can these professionals do such powerful work daily. At this moment I knew this needed to be my reality. It was so magical, powerful and a profound responsibility to be involved in a patient's surgery. Upon completion of Nursing school, I pursued my goal to become a Perioperative Nurse. We are such an integral part of the patient's experience, we meet our patients pre-operatively for 5-10 minutes to establish trust and then they allow us into their lives in no comparable way. We care for our patients with specialized knowledge as well as words of compassion and empathy. They give us their physical bodies to be treated, healed and forever changed. The bigger picture involves the patients giving us total trust emotionally and spiritually. I am hooked on this responsibility of helping create a positive experience for the patients and family going through surgery.

"Perioperative Nursing is the art of taking the positive and negative experiences together to become the power to help our patients"

I was attracted to Red Deer due to its sense of Community and desire to expand my knowledge in the Operating Room. After being a very independent nurse in a rural hospital, I welcomed the idea of a larger group of colleagues to learn and grow alongside with. I decided to pursue and validate my knowledge by completing the Canadian Perioperative Certification exam. Studying and writing the CPNC exam was a great accomplishment for me. I

renew my certification with pride knowing how hard I have worked to achieve my goals of being a Perioperative Nurse.

I truly love my career and all the experiences I have had as a result. I feel accomplished; I feel I make a difference in people's lives. I dedicate who I am as a Nurse to my Nursing colleagues. I have the privilege to work with daily and to my preceptor in the Operating Room in my 4th year of Nursing school. My group of colleagues allow me to expand my knowledge and grow as a person and a Nurse. Through the extremely tough hardships and amazing triumphs of our daily lives as Perioperative Nurses, we have been alongside our patients each step of the way in their journeys. We ultimately feel the emotional connection with the patient, we see and feel their struggles and successes through surgery as our own. The path is not always easy but together we find a way to persevere and do the very best as advocates for our patients, this journey is what bonds our family of Nurses together. This bond was especially demonstrated by a fellow nurse I had the pleasure to work with, Lana Herd. I



learned so much about life from her, she modeled grace with her patients, professionalism with her colleagues and a sense of humor like no other. Her smile always lifted my spirits and conveyed so much warmth, understanding and a passion for Nursing. Lana's beautiful smile was infectious to everyone around her. She gave feedback gently and always built my confidence as a Nurse. I grow every day when I recount my memories and experiences in my Perioperative Nursing years. I realize the human experiences we share in our own lives provides the connection we have

with our patients. To be a true Perioperative Nurse is to be empathetic and to share empathy we must live through, grow and celebrate the hardships and triumphs together. Perioperative Nursing is the art of taking the positive and negative experiences together to become the power to help our patients. I've worked as a Perioperative Nurse for 12 years and it is truly one of my greatest accomplishments. I am hooked on this responsibility of helping create a positive experience for the patients and family going through surgery. One patient, one smile, one surgery at a time. This is the Power of a Perioperative Nurse. A Super Power some could say...

*"The path is not always
easy but together we
find a way..."*

Reflections of a New Peri-Operative Nurse

By Carlee Ness RN BScN

CORNA

I am humbled by surgery, and by the magnitude of responsibility placed on the shoulders of perioperative nurses each day. We have the ability to advocate, and provide care for patients when they are at their most vulnerable. We get to truly appreciate what it feels like to develop the depth of relationship with a patient in a matter of minutes that would otherwise take days. Perioperative nursing blends technological advancement with strict attention to detail, complex critical thinking and an intense human connection. My desire to be a part of new, and ever evolving changes in healthcare, with the ultimate goal of continuing to uphold and maintain the integrity of a therapeutic, caring and holistic surgical experience serves to fuel my passion for perioperative nursing, and the growth of my nursing practice.



"I am humbled by surgery, and by the magnitude of responsibility placed on the shoulders of perioperative nurses each day"

I knew I wanted to be a perioperative nurse when I began nursing school in 2012, however, it was not until I began my preceptorship in the operating room during my fourth year of nursing school that I truly realized my true passion for perioperative nursing. Each day I have spent in the operating room has given me a new perspective on what it means to be a perioperative nurse. I have grown to understand the level of teamwork, communication, and complexity of nursing skills that are required for a positive, safe and successful patient experience in such a high stakes, high acuity area of nursing practice. This level of collaboration and teamwork is one of my favorite aspects of perioperative nursing. Each member of the perioperative team presents a unique set of experiences, and by actively utilizing the knowledge of others, I have been able to grow in my nursing practice tremendously. I have been able to ask questions, clarify my ideas, and compare techniques and practices with my own experiences in order to grow into a nursing practice of my own. It is my goal, that with the advancement and growth of my perioperative education, I will be able to impact the nursing practices of others, just as more senior nurses have impacted me. I also love the variability, adaptability and ambiguity that exists within perioperative nursing. While the principles involved in patient care, and the completion of a surgical procedure are usually constant, each patient presents with a different anatomy, and unique set of characteristics that challenge the critical thinking ability of peri-operative nurses. These challenges, and the ability to continually grow and learn something new on a daily basis is another reason I am passionate about perioperative nursing. I truly love what I get to do as a career each day, and I actively seek out every opportunity to learn, grow, and become a better nurse for my patients, my co-workers and myself.

VISIT
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For more information



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26th ORNAC National Conference ***Tides of Change, Oceans of Perioperative Excellence***

Halifax Convention Centre
Halifax, NS
April 26 – April 30, 2019