

Suite Talk

The Newsletter of the NSW Operating Theatre Association Inc



December 2008

President's Report

Hello and Season's greetings to you all. I'm not sure about you but this year has passed by very quickly and it is hard to believe that Christmas is only a matter of days away!

There is very little to update you on from my previous message in relation to the final review of the PD2005_571 Handling of Accountable Items which is still with the Department of Health.

The NSWOTA Executive did provide an additional submission to the Garling inquiry in October, led by Menna Davies which provided pertinent perioperative information that had been omitted from the previous submission by the NSWNA.

The Chief Nurse, Debra Thoms, has contacted the Executive to let us know that she is still progressing the workshop on Role Redesign that NaMO will facilitate. So hopefully we will hear more in the New Year.

I attended the Association for Perioperative Practice (AfPP) in the UK in early October with the theme of "Guiding practice, assuring standards". It was an interesting four days with topics that were very pertinent globally and although the topics were stimulating and thought provoking, the networking and meeting up with old friends and colleagues, especially with fellow Aussie colleagues from NSW, Queensland and South Australia was fabulous.

As this year draws to an end I would like to thank the Executive members for their hard work and participation on the Executive committee, each one giving up considerable periods of their own time to progress the many aspects that have occurred with the daily management of the Association, the Department of Health reviews plus the planning and management of the Education days and the Conference.

At this time of year, we see a change over on the ACORN Board and I would especially like to thank Jenny Cubitt for her outstanding contribution on the ACORN Board as the ACORN Director. Tracy Kerle steps up as the ACORN Representative whilst Fran O'Brien steps in to the ACORN Director role as well as Honorary Secretary. We wish them well in these roles.

A big thank you, must also go to you the members for participating, mainly during your own time to attend the Education days. The feedback received from all four days has been very positive and we hope that these Education days will grow from strength to strength. These days have certainly been successful due to the support and help that we have received from the medical companies, so they too deserve a big thank you.

The dates are already out for next year's Education days, these can be found later in Suite Talk and on the NSW OTA website. The Managers' forum has been combined with the State Conference as it has been in the past. We will keep the scheduled months set for the other Education days for future years.

Recently I attended the PNAQ Conference and I had the pleasure to attend the launch of 'Perioperative Nursing: An Introductory Text' by Lois Hamlin, Menna Davies and Marilyn Richardson-Tench. It was a fabulous occasion. Well done to the Editors and to all the contributors to the book.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Suite Talk,

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year

Best Wishes

Jane

Chinese Nurses Visit Sydney

ACORN in conjunction with Johnson & Johnson Medical hosted 60 perioperative nurses from mainland China for two days of lectures and visits to three Sydney hospitals – Prince of Wales/Sydney Children's Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred and Nepean. Phyllis Davis organised a program which included a history of ACORN, overview of the Australian healthcare system, models of care, educating the perioperative nurse, leadership, infection control, intraoperative documentation, safe surgery. The presenters were Cheryl Winter, ACORN President, Phyllis, Sally Sutherland-Fraser, Menna Davies, Sue Resnik, with Rob Scherini, Managing Director, J&J Medical Australia opening the seminar.

As the sum total of our Mandarin consisted of 'hello', 'thank you', 'my name is...', simultaneous translation of the sessions and questions made communicating a little less challenging. The President of the Chinese nurses perioperative association brought greetings and gifts. All those present appeared to enjoy the sessions, asked lots of questions and we learned a little about their perioperative environments. The majority of the nurses came from large teaching hospitals, many with over 1000 beds and 50 operating rooms! The photos we saw of their ORs show ultra modern facilities with a cafeteria inside their Op Suite complex, complete with coffee machines!

Finding staff for all these ORs is a constant challenge (as it is for us) and they employ very similar strategies to ours in recruitment and retention. These include undergraduate placements and post graduate education in flexible modes.

During the hospital visits cameras never stopped clicking, our visitors were intrigued by our colourful scrub caps, lack of overshoes, lockers adorned with photos and the lamingtons served up for arvo tea!



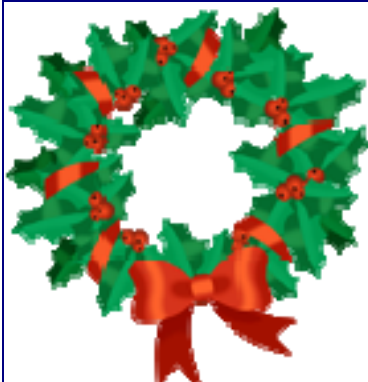
Chinese nurses enjoy some Aussie arvo tea of lamingtons and Tim Tams at Prince of Wales/Sydney Children's Hospital



Kerry Rodgers welcomes Chinese nurses to Nepean



Phyllis Davis, Cheryl Winter & Menna Davies at lunch with some of the Chinese nurses. Ms Wang, President, Chinese Perioperative Nurses Association is on Phyllis' right



SCRUB/SCOUT SEMINAR DAY

The last seminar day (scrub/scout focus) of the year was held on the 8th November at the 3M Innovations Centre, Pymble. We had 39 delegates with some travelling from Port Macquarie and Canberra for the day. Dr Ken Loi, a Bariatric Surgeon spoke about gastric banding and gastric bypass surgery. This was followed by a speaker who has first hand experience in both of these types of surgery and gave us the patient perspective.

Rhonda Branz presented a very topical subject regarding National Registration and Competency. This stimulated a lot of discussion and we have asked Rhonda to speak at the 2009 conference on the topic. Lilian Blair gave a presentation on the development of professional portfolios and their importance for all perioperative nurses.

A topic which initiated much discussion and a request from members that the NSW OTA follow up on, was Craig Williams (Big Green Surgical) presentation on Surgical Plume - what is it and what effects it has on you. As a result of the requests from members, the NSW OTA are putting together a working party to work towards getting action from the Department of Health in respect to Smoke Evacuation. A hands on workshop by TYCO on suturing provided time for the delegates to learn the skills required to suture. An update from the NSW Bone Bank was also given.

The day was a great success, with the evaluations providing lots of positive feedback and suggestions for topics at next year's seminar day. A big thank you to Lee Daniels and staff at 3M who worked tirelessly to support the OTA by providing the venue, catering and lucky door prizes for the day. It is planned that we will hold the next scrub/scout seminar day at 3M in November 2009.

Allanah Hazelgrove
NSW OTA Education Officer

Don't Forget!

Nominations for Excellence Awards Close on 31st December - think about nominating colleagues or teams who have achieved excellence in your workplace during the past year.

Nominations for Life Membership and Certificates of Appreciation close on 1st March 2009 - these awards are for perioperative nurses who have provided outstanding contribution to the specialty over a sustained period of time.

Further information and nomination forms can be obtained from the OTA website or by calling Michelle at the Office.



Change of Address

Don't forget to let us know if you are moving house or changing your email address.

We have had some mail returned to us lately and it is a shame to miss out on all our mail outs.



Conference 2009 Update.

As well as receiving this month Suite Talk we have included the delegate package for the 2009 Annual Conference. The package provides details on the speaker program, trade display, accommodation and transport to Luna Park. We have made some changes to the functions to be held during the conference. The opening of the Trade Exhibition will be at 4.30pm on Thursday 30th April and instead of a cocktail party we will be holding a Tea Party with the Trade.

We have decided not to have the formal conference dinner in 2009. Instead, we will be holding a "Party under the Big Top with the Trade" on Friday night at 6.30pm. This party will be a great event to be held with the Trade under the Big Top. Full registrants for the conference will have their ticket for this event included in the registration fee.

For all things conference read the package that is included with Suite Talk. Information regarding the conference will also be available on the website.

News Flash!

Speaker abstracts will be available on the NSW OTA official website shortly.



**Aussies at AfPP Congress,
Harrogate, UK in October**

2009 AGM

The 2009 AGM will be the next opportunity to make changes to the Constitution or to submit Notices of Motion.

Any changes to the Constitution or Notices of Motion need to be received by the Secretary by 1st March in order to meet the required deadlines for consideration at the AGM. The Constitution can be accessed via the NSW OTA website. Please take a look and please feel free to contact any Executive members if you wish to discuss changes.





New Members Draw

Each year a draw is made from all the new members who have joined the NSW OTA during the past year. There is also a draw for the person who has nominated a new member.

The new member winner is:
Candice Gray, North Gosford Private

The nominator winner is:
Tammy Burns, Figtree Private

Prizes will be heading your way shortly.

Congratulations to both!

You will find a Membership Drive flier enclosed, so please display in your workplace and encourage your colleagues to join the OTA

ZONE REPORT

Zone 5 held their Professional Education Day and AGM at Grafton Base Hospital on a very hot day Saturday 8th November. There were approximately 30 delegates, 2 Zone Executive and myself representing the Sydney Executive. Three companies provided trade displays with other companies offering support.

The theme was 'Under the Jacarandas', reflecting Grafton's title of the Jacaranda city and the street scape was lined with many of those beautiful purple flowering trees.

The day was opened by Leanne Seiffert (on behalf of Chairperson, Mary Anne Wilson, who was unable to be present). The first speaker, surgeon Dr Michael Muscio spoke on abdominal trauma highlighting the deskilling that occurs for staff when most major trauma bypasses places such as Grafton. He emphasised the need for staff to keep up to date with current trends by undertaking ongoing education / drills. He said 'They may not remember what you said, but they will remember what you do.'

Anaesthetist Dr Allan Tyson gave a very informative presentation on Massive Blood Transfusion which highlighted the problems that arise in rural when they do not stock blood/blood products as we do in the city and may have to seek extra supplies from two hours away. He spoke of the importance of keeping patients warm - 1 calorie is required to warm 1 gm blood. So if unit of blood is stored at 4 degrees then it takes a lot of energy to raise that temperature and so do the maths when doing massive transfusion. Lynne Vaughan, CNS spoke on blood products.

Lynne Harris (OH&S Officer) spoke on Staff Health and Welfare starting with the importance of looking after staff! A very interesting discussion, with interactive games played by us to assess our level of stress and workload. To have sustainability we must make healthy changes, overcome stress, improve self esteem and not forget to socialise and energise. The final speaker, Jenny, is a laughter yoga teacher. This was a very interactive, active session with us up on our feet, dancing, prancing, de stressing all of this with much laughter!! As we know laughter is the best medicine.

Debbie Dobbs
Zone Coordinator

2009 Calendar dates for Zone 5:

- February 28th at Kempsey,
- June 27th organised by Lismore, but possibly held @ Ballina,
- October 24th at Coffs Harbour.



Smoke Plume

As mentioned earlier, the Scrub/Scout Education Seminar raised the topic of smoke plume. Concerns centred around the dangers to staff, the lack of smoke evacuators, lack of support to either purchase evacuators or use existing ones.

The NSW OTA is planning to form a working party and survey the main issues surrounding smoke plume. So look out for a survey coming your way in the new year. If the results confirm the anecdotal evidence, the working party will be looking to take the matter to the Health Department and Workcover as an occupational health and safety issue. Anyone who would like to assist the working party please contact the OTA. We feel this is a serious health issue for perioperative nurses – after all we are supposed to be working in a smoke free environment!

Discrepancies in the Surgical Count

The October edition of the AORN Journal (Vol 88, No 4, pp 643-644) includes a summary of a prospective study which set out to evaluate and describe the rate and type of discrepancies in the surgical count. A total of 2,476 counting episodes were observed during 148 surgical procedures with 29 discrepancies observed in 19 procedures. Of these - 45% involved sponges, 34% instruments and 21% needles. Most of the discrepancies involved misplacement of the item (59%), rather than miscounts (3%) or documentation errors (38%). On average each incident took 13 minutes to resolve. Results showed that 1 in 8 procedures involved a count discrepancy raising concerns about potential for retained items. As with any summary, it lacks a fair bit of detail, but certainly whets the appetite to read the whole article.

Ref: Greenberg, C., Regenbogen, S., Lipsitz, S., Diaz-Flores, R. and Gawande, A. (2008) The frequency and significance of discrepancies in surgical count. *Annals of Surgery* 248 (2), 337-341.

Perioperative Text Book Launched!

There was great excitement amongst delegates at the PNAQ Conference in Coolool where 'Perioperative Nursing: An Introductory Text' by Hamlin, Richardson-Tench & Davies was launched at on 28 November. James Harrison, President, IFPN officially launched the book via a pre recorded video, followed by the editors and those contributors who were present being interviewed about the process, challenges, high points involved in writing the book. The launch ended with delegates being able to purchase a copy and having it signed by editors and contributors. The book is available in medical bookshops and on line via the Elsevier website. Congratulations to everyone on this historic achievement!



Lois Hamlin, Marilyn Richardson-Tench and Menna Davies signing the text book at the launch

Websites worth a visit

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)

www.apic.org

Patient Education

www.preop.com

Clinical Excellence Commission, NSW

www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/index.html

Australasian Healthcare Facility Guidelines

www.healthfacilityguidelines.com.au



Snapshots from Abroad

More from Pattie Harrod in Kandahar.....

'I have finally started to train the female nurses for the new Female OT. Every aspect of life in the south is gender separated and the Shura (a local council of community leaders/ elders) requested that ICRC assist with the redevelopment of the theatres and the separation of the genders. We have taken over a wing, which was obstetrics in the past, and part of it is being developed as a theatre and gynae ward of 12 beds. The female ward will remain but at the moment it is over crowded and takes the post-operative caesarean patients. This means that these women are generally cared for by ward nurses and not midwives....quite a difference here with training. Training is very circumscribed and generally very separated and is far less comprehensive than our enrolled nurses' programme.. Having said that, a nurse can work in an obstetric area for a while and then practice as a "midwife" with out formal training. That actually goes for most things here. One of the ICU nurses works in a pharmacy after his shift finishes at the hospital and he is the 'pharmacist on duty'. One of the OT nurses has a 'business in the bazaar' as an 'optician'. He did receive some training in Pakistan and appears to know his job. One of our field officers has been a 'pharmacist' and an orthoprothesist, all in the space of a couple of short years. We have a Mullah with us who is an OT nurse by day and a chicken farmer as well as a Mullah.

.Because of the low wages...the average nurse here will only earn about \$US 60.00 per month for a 6 day week, the nurses have to have extra incomes. Winter is a harsh time for many as the seasonal work dries up and dramatically reduces incomes across the country. It is an annual 'recession' for Afghans.

I started this letter earlier in the week and we have since had another bombing at the site of the one of the local offices close by the hospital. It was a very loud explosion and blew out some of the windows at the hospital (again...a good job to be in). In all 6 people were killed and 51 injured. We had 25 admitted to OT and were operated on in a little over 2 hours. One was serious and we lost him on the OT table, but he had very serious injuries and it was amazing he even made it to OT. It was an impressive effort and demonstrates how familiar the medical teams are with mass casualties. What made it even more impressive was the fact that our second theatre was out of action as we are having some electrical work done there.

The ladies of Green House (where I live) have found a way to de-stress and we have become addicted to "Grey's Anatomy" much to the amusement of most in the compound, since we are all health delegates in the house. We have the complete collection now and started at the beginning for those of us who had never watched it before (that was mostly me and the Norwegian midwife). We watch two episodes an evening and now are nearing the half way mark. We need to complete the episodes, as we are all due out on breaks soon. It's a hoot and so ridiculous but provides a few laughs'. More from Pattie next time.....

Aussie Nurse becomes President Elect of Association for Professionals in Infection Control (APIC)

Associate Professor Cathryn L Murphy RN, MPH, PhD, CIC, MRCNA



We are very proud to announce that Dr Cath Murphy has been elected, President Elect of the prestigious APIC Board, the first Australian and first non American to attain this honour. APIC is based in Washington and is a multi-disciplinary, voluntary, international organisation promoting wellness and prevention of infection world-wide. Cath is originally from Sydney, currently living in Queensland and well known to many perioperative nurses from her many lively and inspiring presentations and her work with NSW Health on the HAI Prevention and Control Program from 1997 to 2004.

Cath holds an academic position in the Faculty of Health Services and Medicine, Bond University, Australia. In 1995-96 she was the elected President of the Australian Infection Control Association and subsequently a Founding member of the Asia Pacific Society for Infection Control (APSIC). Cath's career highlights include working in the Division of Healthcare Quality and Infection Prevention at the CDC, Georgia, USA in 2000 and for WHO throughout Southeast Asia during the height of the 2003 SARS Outbreak. She is currently an independent, international consultant. In 2006 WHO invited Cath to join its Infection Control Expert Advisory Network. In 2007, the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Healthcare invited her to chair their Infection Control Implementation Committee.

Cath will take over as President in January 2010. Congratulations Cath!

OTA EXECUTIVE PROFILE



Tracy Kerle

Current work position:

Nurse Manager, Gosford operating theatres

OTA Executive Position: Secretary and incoming ACORN rep

How did your perioperative nursing career begin?

I started at Westmead requesting theatres. I had been told that I had to do surgical nursing first for two months before I could transfer. 8 months later I had enough so I went to Judith Cornell and said I would resign from Westmead if I didn't get a position in theatre now. Judith took me straight away and I have been there ever since.

What do you enjoy most about working as a perioperative nurse?

I love the challenge of periop nursing and the people who I work with.

What do you see as the main challenges for perioperative nursing over the next 10 years?

Staffing the speciality while still ensuring the speciality maintains the nursing perspective. Building the role of the Enrolled nurse and ensuring they are supported in this transition.

What do you hope to bring to the role of NSW Representative to ACORN?

My years of experience, bull terrier personality and love for periop nursing.

How do you relax when not at work?

Running, boxing, renovations on my house and reading books.

Do you have any pets?

5 of them. We have three dogs- 2 long haired Chihuahuas (Buzz and Dot) and 1 Miniature schnauzer (Zahnee). One bird (Birdy) and one central bearded dragon(Twitch)

What was the last movie or book you saw/read?

The vampire book series by Stephanie Meyer and Get Smart the movie

SEMINAR DATES FOR 2009

A&RR 27th June
Venue: TBA

Educators 21st August
Venue: Royal Hospital for Women

Scrub/ Scout 7th November
Venue: 3M Head Office Pymble

OTA Membership Renewals

In response to queries regarding membership renewals, some info from Michelle our Admin Assistant:

You will receive a reminder when your membership is due to be renewed. For example if your membership is due on 30th November, you will receive your first reminder and renewal form the first week of November. If you do not renew by 30th November you will be sent a second reminder in December. If you lapse your membership for more than two months you will be required to complete a new application form to rejoin the Association.

So if you have moved house, it's important to let me know, so you don't miss your renewal notice.

If you have paid a three year renewal and are not sure when it was due, please do not hesitate in emailing or calling me.