

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Although you will be reading this President's message in the June issue of the ORNAC Journal it was written ahead of time in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. As COVID-19 continued to spread my thoughts were, and still are, with all of you during this challenging time that we face together as a profession and as a country.

Business is anything but usual and nurses are having to draw on their emotional and physical reserves as they navigate this challenging environment. Healthcare professionals are stepping up in so many ways – including those who find themselves working in unfamiliar circumstances, surroundings, or clinical areas outside of their usual practice. We do this, and more, for the benefit of the patients and for our population as a whole. Regardless of your personal situation it is important to recognise and work within the limits of your competence. Use your professional judgement, hospital policies, and the ORNAC Standards to assess risk and make sure that you are providing safe care to all.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has designated 2020 as the Year of the Nurse and Midwife in honour of the 200th birthday of Florence Nightingale. As the first nurse Florence Nightingale was born a leader and her role helps inspire all of us to be leaders today. She

had a clear mission and vision to selflessly provide “evidence-based” care to others.¹ The goals she established for nursing remain unchanged today as we work together to provide a safe and caring environment that promotes patient health and well being. I know that is exactly what each and everyone of you are doing every day and will continue to do throughout this difficult time. Please know that we support you and that we are concerned for you, your families, your colleagues and, of course, your patients and the public. ORNAC is proud of each and every perioperative nurse who selflessly provides competent, compassionate, and safe care to patients and their families across Canada.

Our theme for Perioperative Nurses Week this year is Under the light of Nightingale: From humble beginnings... our best shines through. Florence Nightingale created environmental and patient care standards that were to become the foundations of modern nursing. How ironic that we now find ourselves having come full circle back to the original teachings of basic handwashing and environmental cleanliness. We wanted to reflect, in our theme, the great work done by our own leaders – the founders of the ORNAC Standards, Muriel Shewchuk and Gloria Stephens. These ladies, and those who continue the work of the ORNAC Standards today, led us forward under the “light” of Nightingale.

“Nightingale never wavered from the idea that a basic human right was high-quality patient care provided by a dedicated nursing staff.”¹

Nightingale was committed to the principle that every patient deserves a great nurse. ORNAC recognizes and remains committed to education, research, standards and guidelines as essential components to guide, promote, and develop the highest quality perioperative nursing practice and to ensure that every surgical patient is cared for by a great perioperative nurse!

It is also important to remember during this time, that you cannot make rational and informed decisions if you are not also looking after your own needs. So please take care of yourself as well as your patients. 🌸

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cathleen Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style.

References:

1. Selanders L, Crane P. The Voice of Florence Nightingale on Advocacy. OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing. 2012 Jan 31;17(1):Manuscript 1.