

KEEPING YOU IN THE KNOW: A NOVEL APPROACH TO JOURNAL ARTICLE EVALUATION AND PRESENTATION FOR THE PERIOPERATIVE TEAM

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ABSTRACT

The children's Operating Room at the IWK Health Centre in Halifax, NS, has had some form of a journal club in place for the perioperative nursing group for, off and on, the past twenty years. At times the journal club has had strong participation from the nursing team and, at other times, involvement has been low. This article includes a literature review on the subject of journal clubs and goes on to review the approaches that have worked in our setting. It also discusses the challenges that have been encountered. Participation in the journal club has opened doors for some perioperative nurses and this article aims to assist other perioperative nurses with developing and sustaining a journal club in their setting.

INTRODUCTION

It is important to empower nurses to seek out evidence-based knowledge that will enhance their learning experiences. A literature review is an important tool when discussing journal clubs and a review of the current literature is incorporated into this article. The author, as a member of a perioperative team that is responsible for covering ten

services, notes that there is seldom a day that goes by that nurses don't learn a new clinical skill in our OR. It is important for nurses to use critical appraisal skills when learning new information. Educators can struggle to keep planned education sessions fresh and to foster active participation by all learners. With this goal in mind one approach can be to create and sustain a journal club for perioperative nurses. There are many different forms of journal clubs available – from the traditional, where an article is reviewed by participants and then discussed as a group, to on-line versions that incorporate social media. Social media, such as Facebook, is popular with some for easy sharing of articles, ideas and options. The author's department has tried different versions of a journal club in their Operating Room. This article reviews what has worked for them and how they continue to sustain momentum with our journal club.

LITERATURE SEARCH

Journal clubs evolved as a means to review evidence-based practice and translate that practice into the clinical setting. The author, as a member of a

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children’s Operating Room team, was, as an example interested in research pertaining to paediatrics. Grant (2019) used a Journal club in the PICU to create awareness of evidence-based practice concepts as a framework for enhancing nursing care.¹ Grant also focused on tools to translate this knowledge into everyday practice.

From a Canadian perioperative perspective Sinclair et al (2017) described the vision of their journal club was to “Engage perioperative nurses to read and critique perioperative research in order to consider its application in the practice setting.”² Wenke et al. (2019) reviewed what influenced journal club sustainability and concluded it is dependent on clinicians being engaged, if they are engaged they will take ownership and build their own capacity.³ The best way that the author found to engage the team was to have the participants choose the topic which was of interest.

Purnell & Majid (2017) looked at journal clubs to determine if they improve critical appraisal confidence and facilitate integrating research literature into nursing practice. The small study that they did revealed several

benefits of participating in journal clubs, they were: increased confidence with interpreting research literature, developing critical appraisal skills, the sharing of knowledge and integrating evidence-based practice into nurses’ workplace. The journal club participation resulted in a number of changes in practice in the area that was studied. They concluded the study supported the benefits of using nursing journal clubs to promote clinical practice that is informed by research evidence.⁴

Author’s Experience

In 1995 the author decided to take their nursing career in a different direction and went from the IWK’s paediatric post-operative surgical unit to the Children’s Operating Room. The author was surprised to learn that there was protected education time for OR nursing staff. Nurses who have spent their entire career in a perioperative setting should be aware that this protected time for education is virtually unheard of in other fields of nursing. The time for it coincides with grand rounds for the surgeons and anaesthesiologists and offers a great benefit to perioperative nurses. The Children’s OR at the IWK had 1 hour per week of protected education time scheduled for 10 months of the year.

One of the education tools used at this hospital was a journal club presentation. The author envisioned this as a traditional journal club where journal articles would be disseminated to participants before the meeting so that all participants were informed prior to the meeting. But the Children’s OR journal club was not presented in this manner. Instead perioperative nurses informally presented on a topic from a journal and then the group discussed it after the presentation.

When it came the author’s turn to present, along with another nursing colleague, the educator in the OR assigned a specific issue of the AORN Journal. Hard copies of the journal were available to be signed out, from the OR, for review and preparation.

Figure 1.



By: K. MacDonald

Nurses from the children’s OR at the IWK preparing for journal club presentations (L to R: Y Madore, K MacDonald, M Richard, S Purdy, T Lapierre).

As a novice perioperative nurse the author was pleased to show the group that she had a good knowledge base in nursing and could apply that knowledge to the perioperative setting.

The author's first foray into journal club as a presenter was, unfortunately, something she considered to be very uninspiring. None of the topics in the issue assigned held her personal interest. The next time around she proposed a different approach to the educator. As she was taking her BSc, part-time, and had just finished a course on nursing informatics including a presentation to fellow students on how this topic related to perioperative nursing. The presentation had used several journal article sources and had included overhead projector visuals to enhance it. The educator agreed to a similar approach for the journal club the presentation was very well received by the author's perioperative nursing colleagues. As a novice perioperative nurse the author was pleased to show the group that she had a good knowledge base in nursing and could apply that knowledge to the perioperative setting.

A few years later the OR nursing educator position became available and the author applied and was successful in obtaining the position. It was later acknowledged that . . . the journal club presentation had helped demonstrate her potential as an educator.

Established Method of Delivery

With a new educator for the department the journal club continued in its established format but with presenters left to choose any topic that was of interest to them as long as it related to perioperative nursing. Nurses were assigned based on their availability. There was not any time allowed, during working hours, to prepare for journal club presentations so staff presenting were preparing on their own time. Sometimes nurses said they did not have anything prepared and this resulted in wasted education time. In 2010 there was only one presentation during the calendar year. There were no presentations in 2011 or 2012 and only one in 2013. From an educator's perspective these protected sessions are too valuable to waste. Following a frank discussion about journal club with the

staff it was clear that some nurses refused to present. As a result the journal club stopped in 2013... for a time.

As the educator in the unit the author never lost hope that the journal club might be resurrected. During new staff orientation the virtues of journal club would be mentioned and staff members asked if they would be interested in getting it up and running someday. One of the author's favourite journal club stories was shared on many occasions:

“There was an Atlantic perioperative nursing conference in the early 2000s. When the planning committee was preparing for this conference they solicited suggestions for topics from perioperative nurses around the province. One of the topics requested by potential participants was ‘caring for children of all age groups in the Operating Room’. As the educator for the only children's hospital in the region this request came to me. I remembered that two staff members had done a journal club presentation on this topic and I asked them if they would like to present their topic at the Atlantic Conference. They had to add slides, and a little more content to the topic, than they had previously delivered but the journal club presentation provided the basis for a wonderful presentation. They would have not gotten an opportunity to do this if it was not for journal club.”

Renewed Hope

In September 2017 the author decided to reintroduce the topic of journal club to the group. The Children's OR is fortunate to have very engaged nurse who are focused on education. There are 30 part-time and full-time nurses employed in the OR. When ORNAC hosted its National Conference in our home city of Halifax 11 staff nurses and the manager attended some or all of the conference.

The group showed interest in a journal club that was run on a volunteer basis and so the Children's OR Journal Club was reinstated in November 2017 Names of nurses who were interested in

Figure 2.



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OR Nurses: The view from the perspective of the journal club presenter.

presenting were collected and they were assigned specific dates for presentation (two nurses on each date with at least one month's notice). Assignments are shared via email and nurses are asked to respond back for verification and to ensure the presentation will happen. A reminder email is sent approximately one week prior to their presentation. It was felt that it was important for the educator and the clinical leader to present so those roles were assigned dates as well.

The guidelines in place for presenting at journal club are very informal. It is important to start and end on time so the available time is split evenly between the two presentations with time allowed for discussion of the presentation. Presenters often bring treats which is always a hit with participants. Usually each nurse presents for approximately 15 minutes followed by a discussion of the topic by the group. Some nurses include PowerPoint slides while others have entirely verbal presentations. On some occasions the two nurses team up and present on the same topic, if that is the case the presentation would be approximately 30 minutes with the same amount of time allowed for discussion. Preparation is done on their own time.

The Children's OR journal club at the IWK has been running again for over 2 years and has been well received. Topics presented have included: mentoring, post-op nausea and vomiting, safe patient handling and mobility, music in the OR, OR Huddles, and the surgical liaison nurse. It is believed that the topics are well received because they are coming from nursing colleagues as opposed to management who could have a perceived hidden agenda for a particular topic. Two nurses teamed up to present a topic related to procedural pause and its effects on patient safety. This topic discussed the inclusion of all surgical team members in the procedural pause. With this in mind the educator is currently attempting to get this topic included in the interdisciplinary patient safety rounds so it can be presented and discussed with the entire surgical team.

To date one topic covered in the journal club has resulted in a change in practice in our OR – the presentation on the surgical liaison nurse. The presentation highlighted that it had been more than ten years since that the role had been introduced in our OR and it had evolved into more than a support system for family members while their child was in the operating room. The guidelines for the surgical liaison nurse were revised,

following the presentation, and the role was brought more in-line with the way other facilities provide the service. The presentation increased awareness that not many children's centers across Canada have this role in place. Sometimes when you are a small OR in a small province it feels like you not on in the forefront of innovative thinking but this journal club review proved that the opposite is true in the case of surgical liaison nursing.

Another selling feature of being a presenter at journal club for nurses in our OR involves education premiums offered through the Nova Scotia Nurses Union. Points can be accumulated for presenting a journal club article and as long as the minimum number of points are reached by the individual at the end of the calendar year it can mean additional cash premiums for nursing staff.

When the author was preparing to write this article she decided to do a cross country survey of educators to see who had journal clubs in their ORs and, if they did, if they were included in protected education time. Of the 26 who answered the survey only one educator stated they had journal club and it was being conducted entirely outside of working hours. There was, however, a great deal of interest expressed by many educators for information on how it worked in the Children's OR at the IWK. This article was written to share details and, hopefully, encourage and inspire others to generate some type of journal club.

CONCLUSION

Part of the ORNAC Standards states "Perioperative nursing is a dynamic process guided by theoretical knowledge, ethical principles, research, specialized clinical skills, and caring practice".⁵ The establishment of a journal club aligns well with this philosophy. A journal club encourages perioperative nurses to read and critique perioperative research and to present relevant findings to nursing colleagues. The exposure to journal club has helped

the IWK Children's OR team to incorporate evidence-based research into its practice setting.

There are certainly challenges involved in establishing a perioperative nursing journal club especially in a facility or region that has not historically had one in place. A motivated team is essential and it is also important that it be done on a volunteer basis. Some people have extreme anxiety when it comes to presenting to others but those individuals can still be active participants in discussion generated around the presentation. A challenge that has been consistent in the Children's OR journal club environment has been no time allotted for staff to prepare for the presentation. Motivated nurses will, however, generally still find a way to prepare as long as they are given enough lead time.

The benefits of journal club should not be under-estimated. It is very satisfying to see a team learn together or to see a

change in practice take place as a result of journal club presentations. Being involved in a journal club keeps participants up to date with current literature and helps with critical reading and thinking skills. It also helps those who are interested in presenting to a group gain some experience in this role. The feedback from those involved has been very positive.

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