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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Cathleen Ferguson RN, BScN, RNFA, CPN(C), ORNAC incoming President is the Manager of OR/Perioperative Services at St. Martha's Regional Hospital in Antigonish NS and also works as an RN First Assistant. She is a past member of the ORNAC Standards Committee and past Chair of the Nominations Committee.



The framework for professionalism in nursing began with Florence Nightingale. She set the bar rather high with the way she gave to others and her expectation of excellence in nursing practice. We, as perioperative nurses, are no different. We bear the tremendous responsibility of upholding the values of our profession and, as professionals, we are expected to demonstrate competent and skilful behaviors in alignment with our profession.

The theme for this year's Perioperative Nurses week is Proficiency and Competency: Own your practice. The ORNAC board has developed a strategic plan for 2015-2018 and one of the goals is to advance the profession of perioperative nurses and emphasize their value. There is no better way to do this than for every perioperative nurse to recognize the value they bring to the healthcare system and to take steps to own their practice by demonstrating proficiency and competency.

Each of us needs to perform specialized perioperative nursing practice at a high level and guided by the ORNAC Standards. By achieving Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) certification, and the designation CPN(C), we demonstrate our commitment to expertise and quality of care. When we challenge ourselves to continuously learn and develop we become empowered to create a culture that prioritizes safe and effective care for patients and their families.

Perioperative competence can be difficult to define and measure. Competence is usually defined in relation to technical skills, experience, and knowledge level with little emphasis placed on the interpersonal factors. Although skills, experience, and knowledge are incredibly important we must not forget the other factors that impact performance – such as teamwork, communication, coordination, and leadership. A nurse may have technical competence but it is the combination of technical proficiency and interpersonal competence that creates an effective perioperative nurse.

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So how will you demonstrate proficiency and competency in owning your practice? Make it your personal challenge! I would also like to bid a fond farewell to Catherine Harley – another individual who embodies both technical and interpersonal competence – as she has stepped down as ORNAC Executive Director after five years of dedicated service.

I am so thankful for Catherine's dedication and commitment to strengthening ORNAC throughout her tenure and for her work building effective relationships with our many stakeholder colleagues across Canada and internationally. I know I speak for the ORNAC Executive, Board Directors, and Members in expressing our gratitude for her extraordinary contribution in this regard. Catherine worked under three different ORNAC Presidents and launched, and facilitated, two strategic plans. Her commitment and passion has helped leave ORNAC well-positioned for the future. Thank you Catherine for ensuring a smooth management transition for the organization and for all the work you have done on behalf of ORNAC and all perioperative nurses.

I have personally worked with Catherine both on a provincial and national level and am very grateful for her support and friendship during that time. She will be greatly missed and we wish her every success in her future endeavours. 🌟

*Cathleen Ferguson*  
[president@ornac.ca](mailto:president@ornac.ca)