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# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

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## The Value of Being a Member of Your Professional Association

Many of you may ask the question, “Why should I join ORNAC? The Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNAC) is a not-for-profit association and the national voice for Perioperative Registered Nurses across Canada. ORNAC strives to advance the profession of Perioperative Registered Nursing and to form strategic partnerships that support patient safety. ORNAC acts in the interests of those engaged in the profession as well as in the interest of the public. By joining ORNAC you automatically become a member of your Provincial Council (formerly the provincial perioperative nursing associations) which provides you with access to local networking.

Being a member of a professional association helps establish one as a career professional. It officially demonstrates your interest and commitment to advancing your field and ensures your ability to connect with the mainstream Perioperative Nursing profession. This connection creates another strong benefit of membership – access to great networking and learning opportunities. Professional associations encourage the gathering of intelligent and like-minded professionals, who are immersed in a shared subject matter, to allow for the exchange of ideas, theories and opinions. These discussions can lead to the development of new and expanded collaborations. The professional association offers various networking

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forums through professional meetings, national conferences, association publications and communication and on-line discussion forums.

Another advantage to joining a professional association is that it provides the opportunity to demonstrate leadership. Various roles, from serving as a reviewer of articles for the ORNAC Journal to volunteering on the ORNAC Standards Committee, from getting involved in organizing the national conference to serving on the Board of Directors, provide opportunities for leadership. The peer respect and endorsement provided to those who lead is, regardless of where one is in his/her career path, invaluable. Both prospective and current employers seek to recruit and retain individuals who hold a high standing in their profession and demonstrate leadership skills. Beyond the self-enhancement and relationship benefits of belonging to a professional association this membership also helps individuals meet the definition of a professional by contributing to the health and well-being of the profession itself. If, after

all, those who identify themselves with a particular field are not interested in its future evolution then how can we expect others to care?

Professional associations create a collective voice to advocate for a new vision of the future and to facilitate the activities required to sustain and advance the field. With all the positives associated with membership, including personal fulfillment, a sense of belonging, a better understanding of the field, and the building of interpersonal relationships and networking opportunities, in the end being a member may strongly shape one's future and assist in navigating the challenges of a rapidly changing healthcare environment.

I encourage you to continue to be a member of ORNAC and to seek out new members so that we, as a professional association, are strategically positioned to provide the leadership required for an ever-changing future. Please join us at [www.ornac.ca](http://www.ornac.ca). I also welcome your feedback at the email at the top of this page. 🌟