

# President's Message



As 2011 draws to a close it is a time for forward thinking. A new year is on the horizon and with it comes new opportunity. Perioperative Registered Nurses must acknowledge that the work environment is evolving. Today's perioperative nurse works in a world of high technology and fiscal restraint. This is driven by both the present economic situation and governmental demands. We may work with colleagues who wish to return to the practices of the past but we must, instead, embrace our history and prepare for the future. The past has brought us to this place in time but it will not be able to sustain us as we meet the new demands of the future.

The same can be said for ORNAC. We are facing challenges and must set our path for the future. The approval of the ORNAC strategic plan was the first step in this process of change. Catherine Harley, the ORNAC Executive Director, provided strong guidance and leadership through the first step of implementing our strategic plan. The current Board governance structure requires strengthening in order to be consistent with the mission, vision, and values of ORNAC. The Board and Executive determined that there is a need for a strong national voice that will work to advance perioperative practice; a vigorous process for the validation of ORNAC Standards; and an evolving organization with a foundation based on education and research.

As part of the new organizational structure there will be a decrease in the number of seats on the ORNAC Board while maintaining representation from each of the provincial groups. The Board will also evolve in to one with a governance structure driven by policy. Governance can be defined as "a combination of both overall processes and the structures that are used in directing and managing the organization's operations and activities."<sup>1</sup> Good governance is designed to minimize risk, identify and avoid potential risk, and address problems, when they arise, in a legal and ethical manner.

ORNAC's new structure will require the active involvement of perioperative Registered Nurses from across the country. The input of a vast number of experts will be a valued, and vital, part of the growth of perioperative nursing

practice. This is a means to involve all levels of perioperative Registered Nurses – from the academic world to the grass roots of practice...

and everyone in between. ORNAC can accomplish great things as a unified national body with a common vision and voice.

The perioperative Registered Nurse has the ability and the responsibility to identify patient safety issues within our realm of practice and to influence change. The role of the RN in the perioperative setting must be preserved. Each and every perioperative nurse in Canada must be able to clearly articulate their role. Our breadth and depth of knowledge sets us apart from all other healthcare providers and the art and science of perioperative nursing practice is uniquely ours!

I challenge you to become more involved. With the dawning of a new year take the time to reflect on the successes of 2011 and the opportunities for improvement in 2012. Become involved with your provincial perioperative association and ORNAC. Embrace the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally.

On behalf of the entire ORNAC Board and Executive I would like to wish you and yours a wonderful festive season and a happy and prosperous New Year! ❁

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Karen Frenette".

## References

1. Cooper, K.J., *Presentation to the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada*. Ottawa, ON, September 7, 2011.

*Karen Frenette, RN, BN, MN, CPN(C), is the Surgical Suite Nurse Manager at Chaleur Regional Hospital, Bathurst, NB, a part time instructor for the University of New Brunswick Faculty of Nursing, Bathurst Campus, and the past Chair of the ORNAC Research Committee.*