

FRIENDS OF AFRICAN NURSING (CANADA)

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By/Par K. Woodhead

Perioperative nurse in Malawi receives a gift of protective eyewear.

Friends of African Nursing (FoAN) is a small UK-based charity that was founded in 2001 to help teach and train perioperative nurses in Africa. Entirely volunteer run, FoAN aims to create a legacy of sustainable educational resources for African nurses working in difficult conditions and without access to continuing education. Most perioperative nurses in Africa work in clinical conditions that would be unrecognizable to Canadian nurses. Operating rooms in Africa may have concrete floors, broken or no equipment, outdated sutures and supplies, and a lack of important items

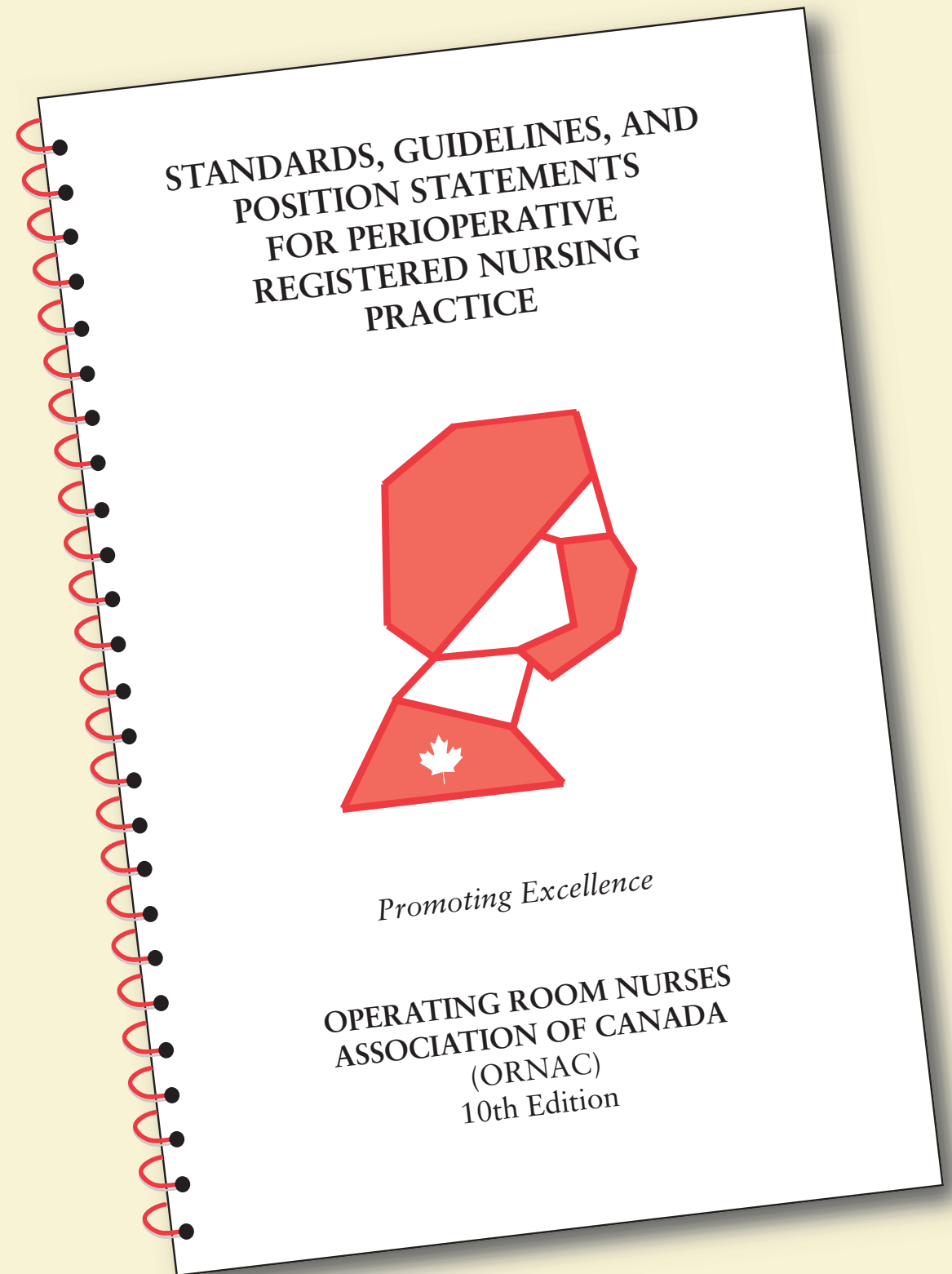
such as gloves, dressings and scrub solutions. Perioperative education is limited or non-existent – FoAN spent time in one country where that had been no perioperative education available for 36 years!

In 2003 Kate Woodhead, in her role as then-President of the International Federation of Perioperative Nurses (IFPN) and the Chair of Trustees for FoAN, was invited to present the Val Sherrif Memorial Lecture at the ORNAC National Conference in Winnipeg. She introduced delegates to FoAN and its work, including providing educational programs based on a framework that begins with an update of perioperative skills and extends as far as leadership development. Since its inception FoAN has provided education to over 1,000 nurses during several visits over a four year period, in nine African countries: Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Ghana, Botswana, Lesotho and Ethiopia.

After several years of planning, a small group has created FoAN (Canada) – an organization that will be officially launched during the 2011 ORNAC Conference in Regina.

FoAN (Canada) is a new, independent organization that will work alongside its counterpart in the UK to advance the education and training of perioperative nurses in the developing world with a strong focus on African countries. FoAN (Canada) is looking for creative ways to support this objective and face the many challenges ahead – most notably the need for fundraising and the need to cover shipping costs to Africa. As its first initiative, FoAN (Canada) plans to sponsor a “Canada Day” where for a mere \$1,000 the organization will pay for the delegate and trainer costs for one day of the 2011 educational programs being provided by FoAN (UK) in Africa.

For more information about FoAN (Canada), to get involved or to support its activities, please email contact@foan.ca or visit www.foan.ca.



ORNAC Standards 10th edition available in May 2011.

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