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President's Message

It is hard to believe that summer is a mere breath away! After a busy spring, the summer season seems to be a time where we slow things down a little. In ORNAC's world, however, we are as busy as ever.

Recently I had the good fortune to attend the *Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN)* congress in Washington, DC. If you have never attended an AORN congress I would recommend it. The congress' are well organized and offer a great chance to get out and see something new. The learning opportunities are also vast because healthcare is so different in the USA.

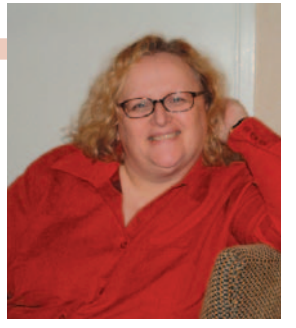
Of special interest to me was an event called *Lobby Day*. On that day a group went to Capital Hill to talk to congressional health staffers about AORN's *Patient Safety Mission* and *National Time Out Day* (taking place on June 21, 2006). They matched up member constituents with congressional staffers so that the AORN members were able to speak to individuals who were familiar with the AORNA member's local area.

AORN also offered a pre-congress education session called *Effective Public Policy Advocacy*. During this session, attendees learned about how the government functions, the processes and how to effectively lobby for change. What a great opportunity! How can we adapt this idea to our own needs? Talk it up amongst your colleagues and see where you can take an idea like this. Why not invite a provincial or federal politician to walk with you through your operating room? Or ask your local government representative to lobby with you? Would Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) be able to facilitate an adventure similar to AORN *Lobby Day*? Should we be requesting it?

Several discussions regarding the shortage of nurses have crossed my desk in the recent months. We are being asked more frequently to preceptor students and I am always questioning why there are not more incentives provided to those nurses who do give of their time and energy in this process. Even our own nursing association (CNA) will only provide continuous learning activity credit up to a maximum of 40 hours over a 5 year period. Is this limit reasonable and does it suit the needs of our profession?

Each time you choose to preceptor or mentor a student you have the opportunity to also learn more

about your own specialty. But, if we are looking to encourage RNs to join, and remain in, the perioperative environment, and at the same time are asking them to take on more and more students in order to help fill our future ranks, there should be additional benefit to the preceptor. Pay increases or extra vacation days are some ways that could be used to recognize the preceptor's contribution.



Some provinces do provide incentive bonuses for staff members who act as preceptors. How does your province rate? Can it do better?

If you think, yes it can, and then it is time to start talking to your provincial government, as well as the CNA, to encourage them to acknowledge the ongoing commitment made by nurses in this country!

Take action, all it takes is one voice at a time. Shout it out and let it be heard by others. We all learn from each other so everyone gains when we work together.

Just some food for thought as you enjoy yourself this summer. Have a great summer season. 🍁

McKay

Source:
Guidelines for Earning Continuous Learning (CL). Canadian Nursing Association Certification Program. Accessed at: http://www.cna-aiic.ca/cna/documents/pdf/publications/Continuous_learning_recert_2006_e.pdf

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