

Conference Calendar

July 25 - 30, 1999

World Conference on Surgical Patient Care, Helsinki, Finland. For more information see (CORNJ Vol.17, No. 1, March/April, 1999 page 31).

October 15-16, 1999

Millennium - Looking Forward - 15th ORNHAD Conference, White Oaks Inn, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. Friday Evening Speaker: Lawyer Linda Barry-Holliwell speaking on "Harassment in the Workplace". Saturday - Lee Ramage, RN on "Protocol for spills and needle injuries". Saturday afternoon motivational speaker Patsy Marshall on "Power of One - Your Attitude is Showing". Contact: Linda Gordon, St. Catharines General Hospital (905) 684-7271 ext 5561.

October 27 - 30, 1999

Operating Room Nurses Association of Alberta Provincial Conference, "Pinnacle or Precipice". Location - The Lodge at Kananaskis. Contact Connie Schulthess, 703 Penbrooke Rd.S.E., Calgary, AB T2A 3T3

October 30 & 31, 1999

ORNASCO Conference at Pinestone Haliburton. Theme: Relax, Refresh, Rejuvenate. For more information contact Donna Plue or Shirley Shacter @ (705) 325-2237 (705) 325-2692. Hospital: (705) 325-2201

May 3 - 6, 2000

BCORNG Conference - "A Peak Experience at Whistler, BC. APEX - Achievement/Professionalism/Excellence.

Inappropriate to withhold opioids in treatment of chronic pain says study

Concerns about efficacy, toxicity, the development of tolerance, dependence, addiction or abuse in the use of opioids have been raised. A recent study, however, of the use of opioids in cancer patients strongly suggests that there is a place for these medications in the treatment of chronic pain as well.

In the study reported in *Arthritis Rheumatology* (Vol. 41, Sept., 1998), Ytterberg and associates examined the efficacy, toxicity, tolerance, addiction and abuse behaviours in patients who received opioids for pain associated with chronic rheumatic disease.

Obtaining information from pharmacy data, medical records and interviews, 290 patients who received opioids were divided into two groups: long-term users (opioid therapy for more than three months: N=137), and short-term users (opioids less than three months: N=153).

Analysing the accumulated data, the investigators found that opioid use in both the long-term and short-term groups had a significant impact on pain reduction, with over 85 percent experiencing reduction in pain severity of at least 30 percent.

Although 38 percent of these patients reported side effects, only a few stopped taking the opioids because of them.

Drug abuse minimal

There was no significant escalation of opioid dosage in the long-term treatment group; and although some patients did escalate their dosage, 97 percent of the time, escalation was related to increased pain severity.

Only four patients (out of 290) were found to have developed tolerance to the drug, and behaviours consistent with abuse. Also, 73 of the 137 receiving long-term therapy reported not taking the medication on days with less pain because of fear of becoming addicted or dependent.

The authors conclude that their findings support the use of both long-term and short term use of opioids in the treatment of musculoskeletal pain. In other words, concerns about tolerance and escalation of opioid dosage were not supported by the study. The great majority of patients in the study used opioids in an appropriate manner, escalating the dosage when needed and then returning to their baseline dosage.

Concerns unfounded

The authors further conclude that it is not appropriate to withhold opioid treatment from patients with chronic pain because of doubts or concerns about opioid efficacy, tolerance, toxicity, abuse or addiction.

Hand Washing Awareness: A Community Health Initiative

By Diane Aboud, Catherine Bustard, Gail Lagodski and Wilma MacDonald

In planning for O.R. Nurses Day in November 1998, the Ottawa Regional Operating Room Nurses Association (O.R.O.R.N.A.), felt a need to make a special contribution to their community. In doing so they had an idea to establish a *Back to Basics Health Awareness Campaign*. Members believed this to be a very important community health initiative. While many ideas were considered, the need for handwashing hygiene awareness was determined to be a priority. By promoting handwashing, O.R.O.R.N.A. wanted to increase positive health awareness both professionally and in the general community. As operating room nurses we daily prescribe to many clinical procedures that prevent the spread of bacteria and infectious diseases. It seems, however, that as a society with a busier than ever lifestyle, many of the basic principles of hygiene are not being followed.

At the Operating Room Nurses Association of Ontario Provincial Conference in Niagara Falls in

April of 1998, we were fortunate to meet a member of Johnson & Johnson Medical Products, Communications Department, Jhane Brazier. After speaking with her about our health awareness campaign we were enthusiastic and encouraged to go ahead with the program. A committee was thus formed from the O.R.O.R.N.A.'s executive and board members to determine the objectives for our community awareness campaign.

In early fall the committee met several times to review all material, including pamphlets, brochures and slides that contained subject matter in relation to our objective. Information was also obtained from the Ottawa Public Health Department, Infection Control, from area hospitals, the library and the Internet. We decided on a catchy slogan or phrase to convey the message of the need for thorough handwashing. We worked with Johnson & Johnson to develop a bilingual handwashing poster and a communications plan.

A form letter was designed as an introduction to

Abstract

Handwashing, so simple but forgotten in this busy, hectic, modern world.

As perioperative nurses, handwashing is part of our everyday routine. The Ottawa Regional Operating Room Nurses Association brought this important message to the community through our "Back to Basics Health Awareness" Campaign described herein.

Authors

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Thousands of Posters were handed out in schools, restaurants & malls. Rachel Clermont, RN, speaks with a member of the community at the Mall on Nurses Day '98. ▽

the poster when contacting members of the community. The goal of this endeavor was to communicate our message via restaurants, businesses, schools, associations, churches, health clubs, hospitals, and service organizations. These posters were offered free of charge, thanks to our sponsor, J & J Medical Products who printed 1000 copies in time for O.R. Nurses Day, on November 14, 1998.

“Petrie dishes illustrated bacteria growth after no wash, a quick wash, and a 30-second wash.”

In conjunction with our handwashing posters, O.R.O.R.N.A. booked a booth in two Ottawa area shopping malls, in the east and west end of the city.

- Booths included a visual presentation on handwashing and various handouts for the public.
- One hospital in the Ottawa area prepared a set of three petrie dishes illustrating bacteria growth after no wash, a quick wash, and a thirty second wash. Adults and children who viewed this demonstration were amazed with the results.
- The free handouts included mini soap bars, balloons, stickers, coloring pages, pamphlets, and brochures related to our theme.
- Several school teachers dropped by to see our displays. Consequently, one of our members was invited to speak on handwashing at an Ottawa area elementary school.
- We distributed 1000 posters and another 1000 were subsequently ordered. Interestingly enough, it was found that restaurants were willing to display the posters in their food preparation areas but were reluctant to post them in their public washrooms, for fear of offending their customers.

It was concluded by the O.R.O.R.N.A. Health Awareness Committee that our campaign objectives had been met and in fact exceeded our expectations by providing members with a sense of having given something very worth-while back to the community. We continue to make the posters available to the

community and plans are under way for OR Nurses Day in 1999 as we plan to continue our public awareness campaign.

The message conveyed through the poster enabled members of our community to take a role in managing their personal hygiene. As nurses, we truly felt we were meeting our unstated mandate of *making our community a healthier place in which to live.*

Remember there is nothing so old, so basic, so simple, as handwashing to fight the spread of infection. So old, so basic, so simple, that people are forgetting to do it !

References:

Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology, Inc. *Infection Control Tips on Handwashing.* 1-2

Coignard, B., Grandbastien, B., Berrouane, Y., Krembel, C., Queverue, M., Salomez, J., & Martin, G. (1998). Handwashing Quality: Impact of a Special Program. *Infection Control and Hospital Epidemiology*, 19(7), 510-513.

Elliot, P. (1996) Handwashing Practice in Nurse Education. *Professional Nurse*, 110(6), 357-360.

Hattula, J. & Stevens, P. (1997). A Descriptive Study of the Handwashing Environment in a Long-Term Care Facility. *Clinical Nursing Research*, 6(4), 363-374.

Health Care Occupational Health and Safety Association. *Handwashing: Spread Protection Not Infection.*

Johnson & Johnson Medical, Inc. (1993) *Handwashing Study Guide. Survival In the Invisible Jungle.* 1-20.



Nurses Day 1998 - Booth at a West End Shopping Mall, in Ottawa, Ontario. (L to R:) Bev Heenan, Penny Gilmour, Cathy Bustard, Ann Rodney, Wilma MacDonald and Heather Macdonald.



Booth at an East End Shopping Mall. Diane Aboud (photo right) speaking with members of the community.