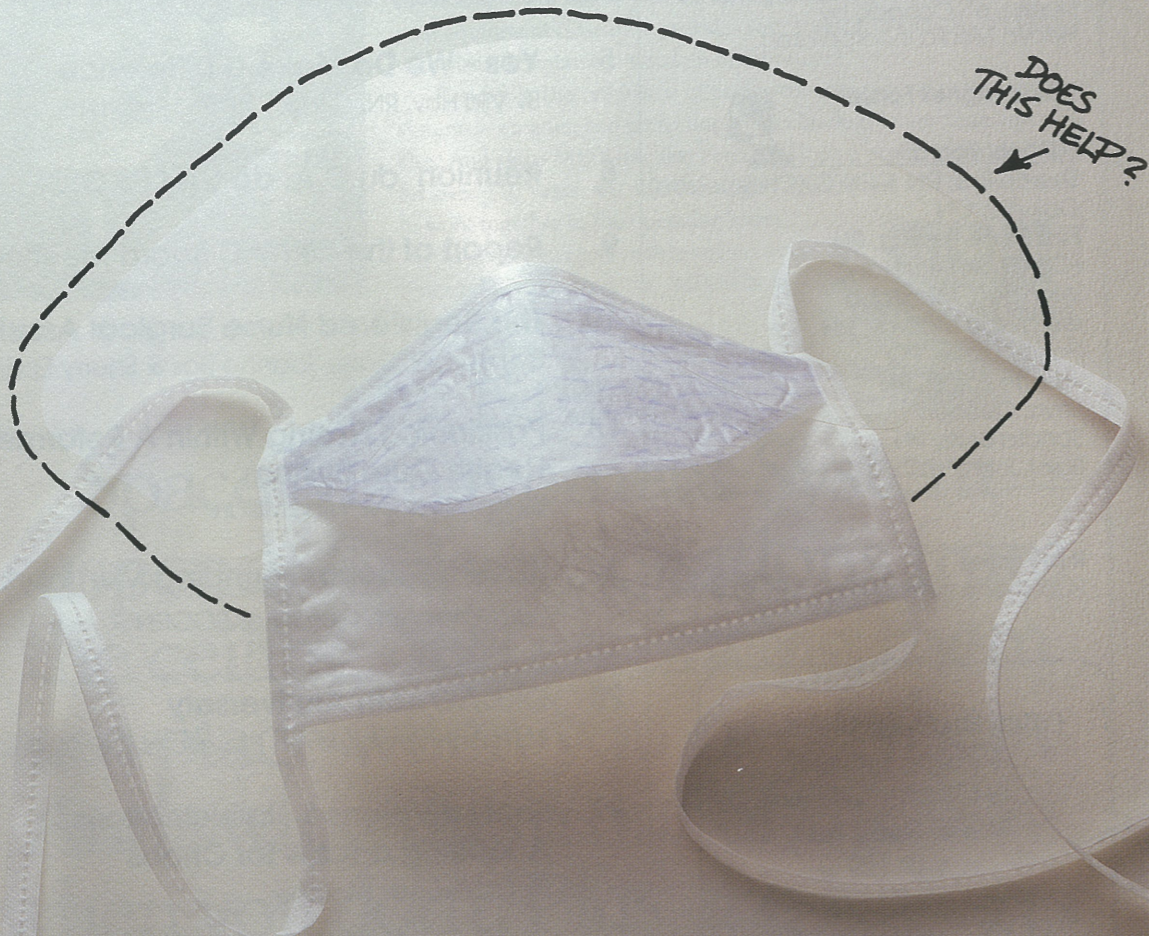


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Yes - We Do Make A Difference

By Vija Hay, RN, CPN (C)

The question, "Are Registered Nurses making a Difference" is not new, but it is being asked more frequently and louder. The Canadian Nurses Association Biennial Convention in June is titled "Nurses Make the Difference - Ask a Nurse". At the recent Operating Room Nurses Association of Ontario Provincial Conference in Toronto a large focus group analysed the question of why do we need a Registered Nurse in the Operating Room.

On May 9th, over a hundred nurses marched on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to voice their concern regarding the direction of health care and the diminished role of the Registered Nurse. These nurses handed out pamphlets entitled "Registered Nurses Make the Difference" and "We are the Solution".

What can we as Registered Nurses, as Perioperative Nurses do to make a difference? My answer is: become involved, speak out for nursing, be an active member of Regional, Provincial and National Operating Room Nurses Associations. Participate on committees, attend local meetings. As well, be an active member of Provincial Professional Organizations. Take part in hospital committees, become politically active, be positioned and ready to speak on behalf of nursing and influence change.

Take every opportunity to speak out in the community and consider writing articles or letters to the editors in your local newspapers.

ORNAC's Executive and Board of Directors and members continue to make a difference through certification, lobbying for advanced practice, devel-

oping standards, reviewing and revising standards, conducting research projects, and through individual achievements.

At the April, 1996 ORNAC Board meeting, Karen Steindel, representing Manitoba, and Judi Tyndall, Ontario, completed their term on the board. I thank them for their contribution - they made a difference. I congratulate Shelly Zareski on receiving the Award of Excellence in Nursing, given by the Registered Nurses Association of Nova Scotia. My congratulations also to Lynda Wilson from Ontario on receiving the ORNAC - Johnson & Johnson Medical Products Drake Thompson Writing Award for her article on Continuous Quality Improvement published in the March/April, 1995 issue of this Journal.

We often take ourselves and our associations for granted. Only when we reflect on the past, do we realize our accomplishments and the impact we have made in our professional lives. The work to date, and the work we will contribute in the future will make a lasting difference to Perioperative Nursing.

Participate and make a difference to your patients and to your profession. ■

Vija Hay, R.N., C.P.N. (C), is the President of the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada. She was most recently Director of Nursing Services, Queensway Carleton Hospital, Nepean, Ontario.