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New Directions

By Vija Hay, RN, CPN (C)

I have just returned from Dallas, Texas, having attended the 43rd AORN Congress, and communications and networking are fresh in my mind. We share common issues and trends in healthcare with many parts of the world. However, the message I heard from delegates, as well as speakers was: collaboration, interdependence and partnership among nursing associations, and international networking. The emphasis was on partnerships.

As we prepare for the upcoming ORNAC Executive/Board meeting in April, it is timely to talk about our role and partnerships in the healthcare community. Shall we follow the traditional path or take a close look at our organization's direction to ensure ORNAC is in alignment with today's and tomorrow's issues and trends, to position ourselves for positive professional and surgical patient outcomes.

We are all aware it is no longer "business as usual". As you know, ORNAC already reviewed the Executive/Board structure, and subsequently changed the executive structure to make it a more streamlined, cost effective team. The Provincial Boards are also reviewing their board structure and by-laws in alignment with ORNAC.

I am pleased to note that ORNAC collaborates, communicates and networks with many other organizations, such as the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), Canadian Standards Association, Canadian Anaesthetist's Society, Canadian Standards Association, the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation, the AORN and other National and International Health and Nursing Organizations.

Let me expand on ORNAC's formal relationship with the CNA. ORNAC is an Interest Group member of CNA. To be a member, more than 50% of ORNAC's nurses must be CNA members. The president of

ORNAC attends CNA's annual Advisory Council meeting, and a Networking session with the other 21 Interest Group representatives. As well, we receive copies of CNA's policy statements, new publications and newsletters and other pertinent information. CNA advises Interest Group Presidents on activities of direct relevance and solicits input when issues are being studied. ORNAC in turn informs CNA of critical and emerging issues in our association and perioperative nursing. And, of course, you are aware of our success story of Perioperative Certification through the CNA.

In light of healthcare changes, CNA is taking a new direction. A new Board structure is being recommended that is smaller, more representative of all nurses and placing emphasis on the interest of the public. This recommendation will be voted on at the June Annual General Meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia. If you can, attend this General Meeting.

ORNAC is now a well established and recognized professional association, and as such, collaborates and networks with other association. Today nursing issues are of local as well as global concern. As an Association we need to be progressive in response to these issues and develop further partnerships and alliances to influence the direction of professional practice, while retaining our core beliefs and values of perioperative nursing. ■

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