



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Igniting Professionalism

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**ASPAN President 2014-2015**

We just completed another fabulous ASPAN National Conference in Las Vegas. I hope those of you who attended took this great opportunity to network with old friends, meet new ones and advance your perianesthesia knowledge through the vast educational offerings provided by Sue O'Day and her team. Hopefully, you were able to "play" as well, and enjoy the sights and sounds that Las Vegas has to offer.

Now, if you were NOT in Las Vegas for a conference, you would have on average: stayed 3.7 days, spent 4 hours per day gambling, budgeted \$560 to spend gambling, been one of the daily 315 weddings AND would have seen the ghost of Elvis back stage at the showroom!<sup>1</sup> However, since those of you who attended spent ALL of your waking hours in educational sessions, viewing research and Celebrate Successful Practices posters, symposia, a Development Reception, a certification luncheon, Component Night celebration or President's Reception, you had no time for any Las Vegas fun!

#### **Nursing at the Top!**

However, here is a very real fact: As of December 2013, in a Gallup survey asked to rate the "honesty and ethical standards" of professions, nursing ONCE AGAIN tops the leader board at 82%.<sup>2</sup> This consistent honor emphasizes the impact nursing has on patients. With this recognition comes great responsibility to maintain and preserve these precious relationships nurtured each day. In the perianesthesia setting, contact may be abbreviated, but the responsibility of getting patients safely through the surgical process can be daunting.

The ability to continue as the most trusted profession lies in our core values: honesty, integrity, responsibility, belief in human dignity, patient equality and the desire to prevent and alleviate suffering. The wisdom of Florence Nightingale remains with us today. As she was quoted in 1859: "The very first requirement in a hospital is that it should do the sick no harm."<sup>3</sup> Demonstrated daily, perianesthesia nurses ensure that patients are comfortable, educated, safe and as calm as possible throughout his/her perianesthesia experience. Our ability to alleviate fears, provide comfort and gain patient trust creates the special bond between patient and nurse.

#### **Professional Responsibility**

We have a huge responsibility as a profession! Think of all the non-negotiable characteristics that are necessary! These characteristics include honesty, attitude, appearance, compassion, integrity, ethical standards, respectfulness, being responsible and demonstrating a willingness to help others. We are accountable for this huge list of qualifications. It is also imperative that we remain current in our practice, utilizing the best evidence and research to support the bedside nurse. Your professional organization, ASPAN, publishes the Perianesthesia Nursing Standards, Practice Recommendations and Interpretive Statements so that you have evidence and best practice to support your practice.<sup>4</sup> Continually seeking the knowledge necessary to provide competent, quality and evidence based care is what our patients deserve. We have all heard the results of the 2010 Institute of Medicine report which are significant for nursing:

- Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training
- Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression

- Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other health care professionals, in redesigning health care in the United States
- Effective workforce planning and policy making require better data collection and information infrastructure<sup>5</sup>

This is not new information. What is new, is that there is now national recognition of the importance of nursing in the future of healthcare in the United States! Florence Nightingale understood how important research, advocacy and a focus on total patient care was to patient outcomes.<sup>6</sup> She was responsible for improved sanitation of hospital wards during the Crimean War, and raised the level of nursing from the bottom rung of the domestic ladder to that of professional. She was considered a visionary with an impact on nursing that continues to this day.

Perianesthesia nurses must also be present to advocate for patients and ensure thoughtful solutions to healthcare delivery. You have incredible influence on patient perceptions regarding wellness and appropriate utilization of the healthcare system. As perianesthesia nurses, you have a valuable resource in your society. Through the *Journal of PeriAnesthesia Nursing*, important clinical content regarding patient safety, evidence-based practice and research has much to offer so that you remain “connected” to the pulse of perianesthesia practice and continue to provide accurate, timely information to your patients. ASPAN’s *Breathline* newsletter keeps you apprised of all the activities and accomplishments of its membership, also featuring patient safety and clinical information. ASPAN’s established liaison relationships allow the organization to affiliate with other associations in continuing collaboration on important initiatives that help meet the ASPAN’s missions. As healthcare resources continue to be challenged, it is up to all participants providing care to work together to ensure our patients continue to receive appropriate, quality care while maximizing wellness at a reasonable cost.

### **Igniting Professionalism**

My hope is that each of you who attended National Conference will spend time sharing the value of being part of ASPAN and ignite professionalism within your colleagues. Encourage certification. Challenge your peers to achieve a CAPA or CPAN credential or offer to mentor them in their journey. Encourage them to be lifelong learners responsible for the future of nursing, patient outcomes and how healthcare will look in the future.

As stated by Florence Nightingale: “Unless we are making progress in our nursing every year, every month, every week, take my word for it we are going back.”<sup>7</sup> It is my honor and privilege to be president of ASPAN and to follow in the footsteps of so many professional, visionary leaders before me. Embrace your perianesthesia nursing practice as it is today, the product of so many brilliant minds that have collaborated to make ASPAN “the leading association for perianesthesia education, nursing practice, standards and research.”

### **REFERENCES**

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