



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Beyond Accountability to Self

November/December 2010

Kim Kraft, BSN, RN, CPAN
ASPAN President 2010-2011

In the last issue of *Breathline*, we looked at professional accountability and the obligation a nurse has to self, as indicated in the Code of Ethics for Nurses.¹ The focus for this column explores a provision that addresses the nurse's accountability to the nursing profession. Provision 7 states, "The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration and knowledge development."² Whether at the bedside, in the classroom, or as nurse leaders, we all have opportunities to advance perianesthesia nursing. Each of us can impact our profession.

Nurses advance the discipline by modeling professional responsibility and integrity. ASPAN's Perianesthesia Standards for Ethical Practice lists aspects of professional responsibility which include: adhering to regulatory policies and standards; ensuring comparable levels of care for patients receiving sedation or anesthesia; demonstrating stewardship with resources; collaborating with the healthcare team to provide optimal patient care; safeguarding the confidentiality of patient information; and protecting patients from incompetent, unethical or questionable practice.³

Reinvent Opportunities

While this list of responsibilities may seem daunting, you are modeling professional accountability and making a difference every day. Recall the times you thought of a better way to provide quality or safer care to your patients. Perhaps it involved providing information on better equipment to perform nursing work, or sharing evidence based research to change a procedure or process. Perianesthesia nurses also have the opportunity to meet this obligation through mentorship, both in the workplace or through involvement with an ASPAN component or its national organization.

Mentorship is key for professional growth and development. When you think of mentorship, do you envision a more seasoned nurse providing support to a new graduate nurse or an experienced nurse newly entering a perianesthesia nursing practice environment? In reality, a nurse does not have to be seasoned in a particular practice to mentor others. For example, the novice perianesthesia nurse may share knowledge about the basics of performing evidence based literature reviews with his or her more experienced coworkers who haven't formally opened a textbook in decades, or may help a colleague master new electronic documentation on a (gasp!) computer.

Opportunity Knocks

The ASPAN Up & Comers program offers a formal mentorship opportunity for nurses who wish to explore their potential. Not every mentee in the group aspires to become involved at the component or national level. Some are interested in developing skills for public speaking or writing for publication. Each mentee is matched to a mentor who has the requisite skill set or experience that fits the novice's goals.

Perianesthesia nurse educators are charged with advancement of the profession through knowledge development and dissemination. This can be accomplished by providing newly hired nurses and established coworkers with up-to-date educational materials, such as competency-based orientation programs, recent research findings with associated practice implications, and journal articles that offer new information and best practice strategies. ASPAN is meeting the responsibility for knowledge development through two avenues – one clinical and one academic. The Orientation Strategic Work Team (SWT) is now developing a perianesthesia education program for the inexperienced and/or new

graduate nurse. The SWT is building upon ASPAN's *Competency Based Orientation and Credentialing Program for the Registered Nurse in the Perianesthesia Setting*⁴ by transferring publication content into online learning modules containing current case study information. The Advanced Perianesthesia Degree SWT was created to design, develop and/or deliver course content in concert with Wilmington University's requirements necessary to earn an ASPAN sponsored Graduate Perianesthesia Advanced Degree education program.

Nursing leadership can advance the profession by supporting established ASPAN practice standards as they relate to different perianesthesia points of care, and empowering nurses to deliver the very best care possible. Leaders can provide a safe environment in which nurses practice by ensuring it is free from verbal/physical threats or inadequate staffing. This is not always an easy task in today's economic and social climate. Strong nursing leaders at the bedside have long been recognized as a way to decrease errors and improve patient safety.

Impact the Standards

Provision 7 also calls on professional nurses to develop, maintain and implement professional standards. To that end, the ASPAN Clinical Practice Committee fields perianesthesia nursing practice queries from around the globe. The incoming questions are categorized and reviewed by members of the Standards & Guidelines Committee, in conjunction with Evidence Based Practice Committee members, to identify emerging perianesthesia practice trends and develop or revise current standards of practice utilizing evidence based research. When relevant evidence is lacking, the Research Committee supports nurses by promoting perianesthesia research priorities, providing grants for research projects, disseminating research findings, and networking with other nursing organizations to identify current nursing research issues.

In the very near future, nurses will occupy an even greater role as healthcare reform takes shape in our country. The new focus will involve nurse-led delivery of care, and nursing will be empowered to change the traditional physician driven care model. It is key that nurses become accountable for the advancement of our profession in order to be prepared for this paradigm shift.

REFERENCES

1. American Nurses Association (ANA). Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements. Available at <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses.aspx> . Accessed September 14, 2010.
2. ANA. *Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements*. Washington, DC: American Nurses Publishing; 2001, 22.
3. American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASPAN). *Standards of Perianesthesia Practice 2008-2010*. Cherry Hill, NJ: ASPAN; 2008.
4. ASPAN. *Competency Based Orientation and Credentialing Program for the Registered Nurse in the Perianesthesia Setting*. Cherry Hill, NJ: ASPAN; 2009.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Hendren R. Nursing's growing role. Available at: <http://www.healthleadersmedia.com/page-5/MAG-253720/Nursings-Growing-Role/> . Accessed November 4, 2010.
2. Lachman VD. Practical use of the nursing Code of Ethics: Part II. Available at: <http://www.nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Ethics/Practical-Use-of-the-Nursing-Code-of-Ethics.aspx> . Accessed November 4, 2010.