

2013 ICPAN Conference Scholarship - Dublin, Ireland
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Converging Practice Celtic Style

Hitting the ground running and enjoying everything that the second perianesthesia nursing conference had to offer is my best memory of this phenomenal experience. Knowing that I would have the unique opportunity of attending formal education sessions with delegates from twenty countries was in itself reason for anticipation and joy. From the beginning of the programme until the conclusion, there was an air of good will and collegiality which prevailed. Informal networking groups from two to two hundred nurses ,shared common issues, brainstormed effective strategies to implement and agreed that our future is built on knowledge from evidence based practice and research. Walking down the rows of posters and stopping to chat with the presenters regarding particulars that were addressed, was in itself a powerful experience. It left me with an abundance of topics to investigate and reliable data that was readily shared.

I decided on a variety of workshops to attend and was not at all disappointed. Listening to pain guru Kim Litwack demystify pain assessment across the life span and Irish Dr. Laserina O'Connor sharing information about opioids and non-opioids in the PACU setting moved my bedside practice ever forward. My favorite session however was a "Gathering of the Nations" which was a forum at which specific clinical questions were answered and shared by the entire group. There was overwhelming support for required competencies for working in anaesthetics and PACU. There was strong consensus about the barriers that affect the efficient flow of patients from admission to discharge. There was validation on the criteria used in PACU to determine readiness for discharge is located in our ASPAN Standards. It was energizing to acknowledge that educational events like ICPAN have a significant impact on healthcare worldwide and specifically on our specialty. Whether the topic was hypothermia, delirium, renal disease, autism or use of PEEP, all ears were listening for the newest evidence and all eyes were riveted on the particulars comprising the posters.

When the closing ceremonies began and keynote speaker Laserina O'Connor had the audience take notice of Who's Who in Perianesthesia Nursing and explained the challenges for the future and the role we must play, my mind was in sync with hers and I was beating to the same drummer. I felt empowered to be the deliverer of faith and hope for our future blended with a stronger commitment to be the advocate (the voice) of our patients, our families and ourselves!

In closing, the popular Irish Blessing says it so well: "May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind always be at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, and rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, May God hold you in the palm of His hand."