

Financial Assistance Report Alex Miller August 2018

Australian College of Operating Room Nurses biennial conference Adelaide 2018

Currently I am working in the Critical Care division of my HCF, so was fortunate to have my previously organised leave to attend the ACORN conference honoured, and was very grateful to have been able to attend. Myself, and several members from The Canberra Hospital were able to attend the Adelaide conference including the ADON, all finding it useful, interesting, and valuable.

The purpose of this conference is to expose best practice knowledge in operating room nursing to a wide range of RNs across Australia and internationally through presentation of current research, expert opinion, and trade displays and demonstrations. The streams of education during the conference were leadership and management/ research/ clinical. I attended a cross section of these determined by my best interest as part of the Post Anaesthetic Care Unit at The Canberra Hospital.

Amongst the most interesting sessions I attended were those on PACU pain protocol, the importance of effective patient warming, the incidence of pt. pressure injuries and methods to decrease, methods to enhance/ ensure aseptic/ sterile technique/ field, the experience of foreign trained nurses during organ retrievals surgery, how to measure the deteriorating patient during surgery, and examinations of the different resources available to help progress through ACHS accreditation, as well as the difference in the current and future standards.

I attended working displays/ demonstrations on warming devices, positioning devices, and patient pressure injury care best practice. These provided an opportunity for equipment manufacturers to display the theoretical and practical utility of their goods.

As the substantive manager of the PACU at TCH a current and in-depth knowledge of latest and available research and equipment will aid me in ensuring high quality customer care within the operating theatre suite and in the post anaesthetic care environment.

On Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> May I attended several workshops on the national standards. "Partnering with Governance" was a fascinating look at how the first 2 standard are interrelated and how they complement each other.

Medication Safety is always a contentious issue within operating theatres given the unusual nature of medication administration within the operating room environment, and how it does not comply with traditional nursing medication administration. In PACU we were having some issues around this very topic so it was extremely useful for me to have this opportunity to attend this workshop.

The talk on the Nursing Standard 7 in the ACORN guide was useful and informative for those of us who have the opportunity to work as managers within the perioperative complex, and useful as well for direct clinical staff to understand the ramifications of the current ACORN guidelines in this regard.

"Fall is not a Perioperative Season" was a greatly appreciated talk. As a PACU manager often I can come to the conclusion that the issue of a patient fall is not, and cannot be an event that will or could occur. Given the nature of the work in PACU and the already highly compromised nature of the patients (and the constant vigilance in light of this), together with the high nurse to patient ratios, it has never occurred in my PACU that a patient has fallen. To be able to give this standard some sincere thought and discussion was very useful.

On top of the days topics, the relaxed nature of the conference made it a pleasure to attend. The ability to be able to always chat happily to the person next to you, assured that they will have a similar interest and be able to offer some insight into whatever issue you are stuck on at the time made it a very enjoyable experience. The social events around and associated with the conference were enjoyable, strengthening ties, and forging new friendships.

I am sincerely grateful to the OTA for the financial assistance I received, and will remember this conference as being a great opportunity to learn and connect with the Australian perioperative nursing community.

The motivational/inspirational speakers at the tail end of the conference are worth mentioning as a standalone point for the fascinating story of Turia Pitt who had the opportunity to thank an individual periop nurse within the audience who had contributed to her care within an operating theatre. Personally this was a powerful moment for me due to my own history working in specialty burns theatres, as well as the alternative side of being a long distance runner and triathlete being able to relate to the plight and state of the athletes involved in the bush fire as well as the treatment process.

Alex Miller

Acting Assistant Director of Nursing

Division of Critical Care

The Canberra Hospital

Alex.miller@act.gov.au

