

COMING OF AGE 2018

International ACORN and ASIORNA Conference

I attended the International ACORN and ASIORNA Conference in May this year in Adelaide. This was the combined 6th ASIORNA and 8th ACORN international Perioperative conference. The conference was held over 5 days with lots to see and learn. There was a vast amount of sessions to attend and a multitude of subjects covered. However a few of the highlights for me were:

Arriving in Adelaide the day before the conference was great as we were able to have a look around at the beautiful city and do a bit of shopping. Adelaide was a beautiful city. There were some fabulous restaurants to eat at.

The conference centre was a great venue, in particular, the trade display centre was exceptionally big with plenty of room to get round and view the trade displays. There were some great new products to see and lots of ideas and company contacts to take back to my workplace. The food that was supplied was lovely and plenty of it. There was ample time to eat and check out many of the trade stalls.

From the beginning it was clear that the organisers had put a massive effort into the organisation of the conference and it was highlighted in the streamlined, smooth running every day.

Day 1 after lunch was all about National Standards and having recently just been through accreditation in my own organisation it was interesting to listen to how other organisations prepared for accreditation and ensured they were meeting all of the National Standards. The sessions I did attend on the National Standards gave me some tips for future accreditation to ensure we are prepared and practicing within the guidelines of the Standards to ensure best patient care. Overall I felt most of us were on the same page in ensuring meeting the Standards within our organisations.

Day 2 commenced with the Opening Ceremony which I thought was outstanding and seeing all the members of the college enter from all the States made me really admire the work they do and the time and dedication they put in to their own areas Operating Theatre Association. It was nice to see them all recognised. They really are a great bunch of dedicated Perioperative Nurses who give up their time to ensure practice in perioperative nursing is always up to date and supported by organisations like the OTA and ACORN. It was amazing that there were 1250 attendees at the conference coming from 25 different countries!

The Judith Cornell oration by Sally Sutherland-Fraser – Who do you think you are? was excellent. Sally was an amazing speaker and certainly is an inspiration to all Perioperative Nurses.

The MC for the conference Kelly Nestor was overall a good presenter, however was at times a bit over the top!

I particularly enjoyed all of the keynote speakers. Professor David David was very interesting and very down to earth in his presentation. His work achievements are amazing including being the head of the Australian Craniofacial Unit, President of the Institute of Craniofacial Studies and being

the recipient of the Companion of the Order of Australia in 1988 and in 1990 being named South Australian of the Decade –WOW!!!!

Turia Pitt was inspirational and a pleasure to listen to. We were all captivated by her and her sheer hard work and determination to fight through and conquer the horrendous injuries she suffered. It was particularly special when she brought her son and husband onto the stage. I'm sure most of us in the audience were brought to tears listening to her story. An EXCEPTIONAL woman!

Dr Francis Seow-Choen, colorectal surgeon from Singapore was great and an amazing man with all of the committees and commitments he is involved in – including writing books on stick insects!!!! Where do some people get the time and energy? His presentation was great in the fact that he reminded us all that you definitely need to have other interests outside of work.

There were so many sessions to choose from, so every day I circled the ones I wanted to attend and took it from there.

Some of these sessions were:

WORKING WITH THE LEADERSHIP TEAM ON CHANGE MANAGEMENT STYLE – Mrs Tammy Burns

I enjoyed this presentation as our organisation is a peer hospital with Wollongong and we are currently going through the same changes Wollongong have.

Tammy spoke well on the topic and was able to give some tips on how to manage change and on dealing with all different types of people on your team. I was able to catch up with her and get some more information and advice on moving forward and dealing with redevelopment in your organisation.

COMING OF AGE, MINDFULNESS, YOU AND WORK – Mrs Jennifer Cubitt

I think this meditation based wellness and compassion training program is a great initiative for any organisation. My organisation offers the same, however it is difficult to attend the sessions.

Saturday morning's mock trial was fascinating and it really did ring home to me the importance of following policies and procedures within your organisation. It reminded me that these guidelines are developed to not only protect the patient but us as Perioperative nurses also. Errors occur when procedures are not followed correctly and adverse events can happen.

Overall the conference was a very well organised and run event – congratulations to all involved – you all deserve a big pat on the back. It was a great opportunity to network and view new concepts and ideas available in the perioperative field.

Thank you to the NSW OTA for the grant that gave me the opportunity to attend this excellent conference!

Janice Marks NUM

Gosford Operating Theatres

Central Coast Local Health District