



The Operating Room Registered Nurses' Role in Primary Health Care

The Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNAC) supports the Canadian Nurses Association's beliefs that Registered Nurses have a key role in making primary health care a reality in our country.

ORNAC, to date, has not taken specific action at a national level, however, individual members and small groups of operating room Registered Nurses are providing primary health care through personal and community contacts.

While operating room Registered Nurses have traditionally not been involved in the provision of initial health care services, a clinical aspect of operating room nursing practice is broadening in scope within the preoperative, intraoperative and immediate postoperative patient care. This provides the opportunity for more patient and family contact. Within this scope, operating room Registered Nurses are able to perform direct patient care, teach and educate patients, family, health care personnel and as well the community. Operating Room Registered Nurses will also support and/or perform research and supervise/manage health care services.

Examples of the operating room registered nurse as a primary health care provider are evident in the promotion of:

- Healthy lifestyle choices that may prevent possible surgical intervention
- Participation in local and regional health councils and slashed for having a legislative review so that activities can be pro active instead of reactive
- Surveillance of disease conditions, recurrent operative procedures, and patients requiring infection control follow-up
- Health education to patients, students and the public's:
 - Perioperative assessment clinics and/or admission to the operating room suite
 - Nurses educators and staff to teach students and/or other health care team members
 - Promotion events such as "National OR Nurses Day"
- Collaboration with other primary health care personnel in providing patient care.
- Effectiveness of services through Quality Improvement Program with particular emphasis on the effect of such services in primary health care.

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