



Standards of the Month – October 2021

The *ORNAC Standards, Guidelines, and Position Statements for Perioperative Registered Nurses* is a central pillar of the Operating Room Nursing Association of Canada. The Standards have evolved substantially since the first edition under the title of *Standards for Operating Room Nursing Practice* back in 1986. Our goal is to direct and support perioperative professional practice and the delivery of optimal patient care.

The intended application of these standards is for the perioperative environment. It is the responsibility of the individual perioperative registered nurse and health care organization to ensure that the most current recommendations are being used. Recommendations need to be applied in the context of the setting, respecting federal, provincial, and territorial regulations, and in alignment with organization policy. In reading the Standards the foundational terminology is signified by:

shall—is used to express a requirement (i.e., a provision that the user is obliged to satisfy in order to comply with the standard or guideline);

should—is used to express a recommendation or that which is advised but not required; and

may—is used to express an option or that which is permissible within the limits of the standard or guideline.

In response to the pandemic, much of the new content added for the 15th edition released in 2021 relates directly to practice issues and challenges at the forefront of our nursing practice. For example, significant additions and enhancements have been made throughout Section 2 on personal protective equipment, including information on glove, mask, and eye protection selection and use. Added to Section 5, is an entirely new, comprehensive subsection on pandemic planning which includes recommendations for best practices on everything from perioperative human resource management to airway management.

The role of the perioperative nurse is reflected in the updated ORNAC mission, vision, and values statements as well as information on how the ORNAC Standards fit in the hierarchy of practice controls for perioperative nurses.

Recommended practices for VTE prophylaxis were also updated as part of the Section 3 review. While not new content, we have changed the order of Section 3 to better reflect the patient care journey and the sequence in which nursing care is provided in the OR.



The ORNAC Standards Committee is working on the 16th edition for publication in the spring of 2023. It is the mandate of the ORNAC Standards Committee to review, validate, and update current standards and to develop new evidence-informed guidelines using research, current clinical practice, and expert opinion. The final document represents consensus on the content based on the best available and reviewed literature.

The ORNAC Standards are now available as an annual subscription (where the number of users requiring access is >100), complementing the existing bound paper copies and digital downloads. We hope that these new e-subscriptions available to health care organizations will enhance the access to the digital versions of these crucial standards.

More information about Standards, and how to purchase them through CSA Group (ORNAC members are entitled to a 10% discount) is available here <http://ornac.ca/en/standards>