

2020–2021 Activity Highlights

Committees and Task Forces

Awards Committee

The Awards Committee continued to refine the online applications for the individual awards. The Committee reviewed and scored all individual applications based on award categories. Promotions to encourage individual achievement awards were conducted throughout the open nomination timeframe through social media, the Chapter Leader Bulletin, and Periop Today. The Chair of the Awards Committee worked with a selection panel to review the nominations for the Award for Excellence. All award recipients will be recognized at the 2021 Global Surgical Conference and Expo.

Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws Committee met over the past year to explore the face-to-face requirement for House of Delegates meetings and consider language changes to address future extenuating circumstances that may prevent face-to-face meetings. The Bylaws Committee will present its findings and recommendations during the First Forum and again for member vote during the Second House of Delegates. A proposal from an AORN member will also be considered during the 2021 Congress.

Clinical Nursing Practice Committee

The Clinical Nursing Practice Committee reviewed new and existing clinical nursing practice issues and developed strategies to assist perioperative nurses to implement successful practices. This year the committee revised the AORN Position Statement on Allied Health Care Providers and Support Personnel in the Perioperative Practice Setting. The position statement was extensively revised and retitled to the AORN Position Statement on Delegation in Perioperative Practice Settings.

Continuing Education Approval Committee

The AORN Approval Unit is a service available to all AORN chapters, state councils, and other eligible constituents who submit an application for review and approval of nursing continuing professional development contact hours. The Continuing Education Approval Committee (CEAC) peer reviews the applications for contact hours accredited by the American Nurses' Credentialing Center (ANCC). The committee ensures the Approval Unit is consistent with the ANCC guidelines and each application meets the criteria established by ANCC. The committee is composed of 17 AORN members experienced in nursing continuing professional development and the application review process. Annually the committee reviews the customer evaluations and reviews the policies and procedures to ensure alignment with the ANCC criteria. Currently the committee is working on updates to the application review site as well as the online instruction manual. In 2020 CEAC reviewed **105** applications and approved **285.9** contact hours.

Fellowship Selection Committee

The Fellowship Selection Committee established the criteria for becoming a fellow, developed the online application and scoring methodology, promoted the fellowship via AORN marketing mediums to the members, and developed the process that was implemented in the selection of the inaugural class of fellows in 2020.

Global Relations Committee

The Global Relations Committee includes perioperative stakeholders and the global

perioperative nursing community. The committee selected the education content for the Virtual Global Track at the Global Surgical Conference.

To ensure quality presentations, a diverse inclusion of topics and speakers were suggested from a variety of resources, including abstracts submitted via the online proposal process, global speakers referred by committee members, and professional networks. Presentations were identified that were consistent with the theme, Our Shared Purpose: Safe Surgery Together, and met the needs of the attendees based on a need's assessment.

Sessions selected for the Global Track will explore perioperative issues that transform global perioperative practice. Global speakers will represent Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, South America, and Zealandia.

Global Surgical Conference Education Committee

To ensure high quality educational programs at the AORN Global Surgical Conference & Expo, proposals were received from a variety of sources, including online submissions, referrals, recommendations, and a variety of professional networks. A multi-step review process was utilized by the committee, including blind review, full review, and comparisons by content focus area, speaker, and facility. Conference calls to discuss the scores and determine which programs would best meet the needs of membership were held and the final decisions were based on targeted needs assessments, prior evaluations, environmental scans from programs, events, and industry trends. The committee compared the proposals when a potential speaker submitted several proposals, and a comparison review was completed for proposals that spoke to the same topic to select the most encompassing. This committee reviewed and scored each poster submitted virtually and the top ten percent were selected for special recognition.

Guidelines Advisory Board

The members of AORN's Guidelines Advisory Board (GAB) play a vital role in guiding perioperative nursing by facilitating review and approval of AORN's evidence-based Guidelines for Perioperative Practice. The GAB is responsible for final review and approval of each new or revised guideline. Six guidelines were reviewed and updated for 2021 and were released to e-subscribers to the Guidelines for Perioperative Practice in 2020. The new and updated Guidelines are:

- Laser Safety (electronic release July 13, 2020)
- Tourniquet Safety (electronic release May 11, 2020)
- Electrosurgical Safety (electronic release July 13, 2020)
- Instrument Cleaning (electronic release October 12, 2020)
- Care of the Patient Receiving Local-only Anesthesia (electronic release November 9, 2020)
- Specimen Management (electronic release December 14, 2020)

Three of the six guidelines scheduled for publication in 2022 have been electronically released in 2021 so far including:

- Radiation Safety (electronic release April 12, 2021)
- Patient Skin Antisepsis (electronic release May 10, 2021)
- Complementary Care (electronic release June 14, 2021)

In addition to these scheduled updates, the GAB reviewed and approved off-cycle updates to two

guidelines during their term. These included a change to the Guideline for Patient Positioning regarding the use of shoulder braces for Trendelenburg positioning (effective November 2020), and an addition to the Guideline for Surgical Attire to address religious head coverings in the restricted and semi-restricted areas of the perioperative environment (effective May 2021).

National Committee on Education

The purpose of the National Committee on Education (NCE) is to develop educational materials to meet the needs of AORN members.

- The NCE reviewed and gave feedback to reaffirm the AORN Position Statements “Entry into Practice” and “Value of Clinical Learning Activities in the Perioperative Setting in Undergraduate Nursing Curricula”.
- The NCE conducted a research project in 2019-2020 in response to a committee charge “Explore a ratio of educators to number of staff to use for position justification and benchmarking.” As a result of the research findings, a position statement “The Value of the Perioperative Nurse Educator” has been drafted and sent out for public comment. The NCE is currently reviewing the public comments and plans to submit the position statement for approval by the Board of Directors and AORN members.
- The NCE has convened a subcommittee to update the Bariatric tool kit and a literature search is in progress.

National Legislative Forum

The National Legislative Forum (NLF) is open to all members and works with the AORN Government Affairs staff to advance AORN’s policy agenda at the state and federal levels. Forum members serve as resource for each other and a sounding board for AORN Government Affairs staff as they review over 100 bills and regulations impacting perioperative registered nurses, including surgical smoke evacuation, surgical technologist and central supply technician certification and education requirements, funding for nursing education, safe staffing, and safe pain control after surgery. Recent successes include Rhode Island, Colorado, and Kentucky enacting smoke evacuation legislation and a dozen other states working on similar initiatives in 2021 and into 2022.

Nursing Research Committee

The Nursing Research Committee reviewed all poster abstracts submitted for the AORN Global Surgical Conference & Expo in research or evidence-based practice. They reviewed and awarded two research grants: one for the Sigma Theta Tau/AORN grant and one for the AORN/Southern Nursing Research Society grant.

The committee developed a Research Roadmap to increase the quantity, quality, and funding of perioperative research consistent with AORN’s research and legislative priorities which will continue into 2021-2022.

Recruitment and Retention of Perioperative Nurses Task Force

The nursing shortage in perioperative nursing is an important focus for AORN. This Task Force, in its second year, was given the assignment to explore creative methods of recruitment of novice and experienced nurses to the perioperative specialty, explore and recommend strategies to increase diversity in the perioperative setting, develop resources to assist educators and perioperative leaders in recruitment and retention, develop a template for succession planning for key management positions in the operating room, and develop options for using retired or soon-to-be retired perioperative nurses in facilities. Perioperative leaders with extensive expertise in

recruitment and retention of perioperative teams were appointed to the Task Force. This group was ambitious in setting goals for delivering tools this year by adding to the Recruitment & Retention Tool Kit that the Task Force had developed in the previous year. All five assigned initiatives have corresponding resources that are found in the tool kit including:

1. a planning guide for recruiting perioperative RNs using the “Behind the Mask” video coupled with an open house planning tool;
2. a whitepaper detailing the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizational recruitment and retention;
3. a whitepaper that provides resources to assist educators and perioperative leaders in recruitment and retention;
4. a template for succession planning for key leadership positions in the OR; and
5. a whitepaper with guidance for creatively using retired or soon to be retired perioperative RNs in facilities.

Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee reviewed the Academic Scholarship applications and awarded 76 scholarships totaling \$101,150 for the 2020-2021 academic year.

The Committee reviewed 272 grant applications for the 2020 AORN Global Surgical Conference & Expo. However, awards were not able to be provided given the cancelation of the 2020 Expo.

117 CNOR/CSSM grant applications were reviewed and 114 individuals were given grants.

Task Force to Define the Role of DNP’s in Perioperative Services

The DNP Task Force conducted a literature review and surveyed DNP prepared perioperative nurses and wrote a white paper and job description defining how the role of the DNP prepared nurse is being operationalized in perioperative services compared to other clinical nurse leaders, and other advance practice nurses.

Workplace Civility Task Force

Workplace incivility remains an issue of significant concern in the perioperative environment. President Wyatt initiated this task force as a collaborative effort between AANA, AORN & ASPAN. Their job was to review the issue of professional and workplace nurse incivility, review relevant position statements and provide direction for what resources are necessary to support a healthy workplace and decrease the incidence and impact of incivility. Representatives from each group worked together to create a joint position statement that has been accepted and disseminated by all three organizations. The group also worked tirelessly to review and summarize relevant literature and evidence into a paper that will be finalized and published. The paper covers the current state of knowledge, practice and research opportunities about the issue of workplace civility and its impact on nurses and patients in the perioperative environment. Each group will present the activities and findings of this work at their own annual conference.