

WINTER 2024

SNIPS & SNAPS

ORNAA NEWSLETTER

FAMILY DAY IN THE OR



[Read More - Page 2](#)



CORNA Hosted OR Family Day on November 16th at the Red Deer Regional Hospital Centre OR in celebration of Perioperative Nurses Week. There were 256 people attendees including 127 of those were children. Thank-you to those who volunteered.

Crisis in the OR: When Seconds Count – A Case Study on Crisis Management and Team Coordination

Barbara Mushayandebvu

Purpose and Goals:

This case study serves as a teaching tool aimed at fostering professional development, with a particular focus on enhancing communication, leadership skills, and critical thinking. The goal is to encourage growth opportunities within the team, highlighting the importance of supporting and learning from one another in high-pressure environments.

Case Overview:

The case discussed centers on an Endoscopic Ivor Lewis procedure that lasted nearly seven hours therefore going into next shift, and then turned into an emergency after closure and at shift change. The procedure overall went well despite aggressive bleeding which was identified and successfully controlled.

After the procedure, patient was moved off the table onto their own bed ready for transfer to PACU. But PACU was full, and so the patient had to remain in the room until space was available. During this waiting period, the anesthetist became increasingly concerned with the patient's vital signs, particularly the drop in hemoglobin levels and blood pressure.

Shift change took place while waiting for space in PACU. I handed over the patient's care to evening shift RN assigned to the room and left the OR. On my way to the locker room, I realized I had forgotten my water bottle and returned to the OR. To my surprise, the patient was still in the room. I quickly learned that the patient's vitals had deteriorated, and the anesthetist asked me to contact the surgeon.

As the anesthetist consulted with the surgeon, I realized the nature of situation we were dealing with and immediately went into the sterile core to begin preparing for a laparotomy. Two of the evening shift RN's began clearing the room of equipment and instruments used from the original surgery. On return to the room, the decision had been made: a laparotomy was necessary.

We quickly began setting up for the procedure. The junior RN was asked to scrub in, while the senior RN and the fellow transferred the patient back onto the operating table. Call was made overhead to ask for help and within moments 3 more staff came in (RT and 2 RNs) and were assigned roles such as ordering massive transfusion pack and checking it and gathering more supplies for the scrub.

What Went Well:

Several factors contributed to the successful outcome of this case:

- **Effective Communication:** Throughout the shift and at shift change, we maintained clear, closed-loop communication, particularly during handovers and coordination with the anesthetist, charge nurse and surgeon. Promptly identifying the signs of a problem and taking swift action to address the issues played a key role in achieving a successful outcome.
- **Role Clarity:** Every team member stepped into their role with precision, from verifying blood to ensuring the scrub nurse was adequately supplied and anticipating the needs of the surgeon and anesthetist.
- **Professionalism:** Despite the stress of the situation, every team member remained calm and professional, which helped maintain order and focus in a high-pressure environment.

What Could Have Been Done Differently:

While the situation was managed well overall, there are always lessons to be learned:

- **Safety Checks:** Doing a full count used up valuable time and could have been avoided. Doing an x-ray at the end and bagging used sponges in 5's would be used to check for retained objects
- **Double Scrubbing:** Double scrubbing could have been utilized for added safety, particularly during such a high-stakes moment.
- **Minimizing Noise:** The operating room environment can quickly become chaotic. Reducing background noise could have helped us stay focused and communicate more effectively during critical moments.
- **Clearer Communication:** Being more intentional about using names when giving orders or requesting supplies such as using closed loop communication, could have minimized any potential confusion and ensured that all team members were on the same page.
- **Coordination with MDRD and Core:** Better communication with the sterile processing department (MDRD) and the sterile core team regarding supplies could have made the process of gathering additional equipment more efficient.

Takeaways and Lessons Learned:

- **The Importance of Communication:** Effective, clear communication is essential for patient safety and team coordination. Maintaining strong handover procedures and open lines of communication always is critical.
- **Debriefing:** After any high-pressure situation, it's important to debrief with the team. This allows for reflection, helps the team process emotions, learn from experience and improve clinical skills. Ideally this should be done within 24 to 72 hours of the incident.
- **Critical Thinking:** Critical thinking is at the core of being a skilled nurse. These are the abilities that allow us to prioritize, make quick decisions, and act decisively in moments where patient safety is at risk.
- **Adaptability:** In healthcare, unexpected challenges can arise at any time. The ability to stay calm, think critically, and adjust as needed is vital to ensuring the best possible patient outcomes.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Ultimately, the successful management of this patient was a result of effective teamwork and collaboration. When everyone works together, even the most challenging situations can be managed effectively

This case underscores how vital it is to cultivate strong communication, critical thinking, and collaborative skills in the operating room. By learning from each experience, we can continue to grow as professionals, improving patient safety and care in the process

Author's Biography

Barbara Mushayandebvu is a Registered Nurse with over 30 years of experience in the OR. She graduated with diploma in general nursing in Zimbabwe 1983 and BSc (Hons) Perioperative Nursing (University of Derby UK) in 2023. She has worked in diverse perioperative settings across Zimbabwe, South Africa, the UK, and Canada, bringing a global perspective to her practice. Throughout her career, Barbara has gained extensive experience in all surgical specialties. She has held leadership roles, including Clinical Leader and Clinical Nurse Educator, served in key positions including President with the Operating Room Nurses Association of Alberta (ORNAA) and the Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNAC).



NCORNA's 2024 Promising Star: Ashley Alqueza

Ashley has been a registered nurse for 5 years and has become a valuable member of the surgical team at Leduc Community Hospital for almost two years. Her clinical expertise in the operating room is complemented by her ability to foster a calm and supportive environment for both patients and colleagues. She consistently demonstrates a high level of professionalism and competence, ensuring that every surgical procedure is executed smoothly.

One of Ashley's most notable contributions has been her initiative in implementing the Central Core Inventory

tool to streamline the organization of clinical supplies used during surgeries. This enhancement not only improved the arrangement of supplies but also significantly reduced the time required for retrieval.

Ashley began her journey with general surgery and has since successfully expanded her skills across various specialties. She confidently leads the general surgery room, sharing her knowledge and emphasizing the importance of maintaining high standards of care among new staff members and students.

Ashley is passionate about her work with the multidisciplinary team in the Leduc OR. Ashley enjoys the challenge of working in the variety of surgical specialties saying, "This allows me to use my knowledge, skills, and experience to succeed in a fast paced OR." In her spare time, Ashley enjoys spending time with my fiancé and our dog.