



**Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada**

**Association des infirmières et infirmiers de salle d'opération du Canada**

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### **MURIEL SHEWCHUK LEADERSHIP AWARD**

Muriel began her nursing career as a Registered Nurse from the University of Alberta in 1962. Alberta born, raised and employed, her 44 years of nursing experienced include: staff RN, Educator, Manager, Charge Nurse (urology, plastics, ophthalmology & neuro), School of Nursing Instructor, and OR Techniques Instructor, assistant director, and director in Alberta's two largest acute care teaching health care centers – the University of Alberta Hospital in Edmonton, the Foothills Medical Centre and the Calgary Health Region in Calgary. Prior to her retirement in 2005, Ms. Shewchuk spent 19 years as the Director of Surgical Suites and successfully led the regionalization of surgical suites in seven hospitals. This included the closure of three adult hospitals and the consolidation of all 47 operating theatres to three adult sites. Muriel had managed a budget of over 95 million and over 850 staff providing surgical theatres for over 325 surgeons in operating rooms and clinics. Ms. Shewchuk exemplifies leadership.

Muriel was instrumental in the formation of ORNAC in 1983 and you'll find her name within the history of the Association many times as a Board Member, chair of the first Awards Committee and co-author of the first Communiqué', (1965-1991). She also designed an ORNAC Awards plaque and pin. She has also been actively involved with her home province perioperative organization as well as the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses (AARN) regarding competencies and standards.

Perioperative practice caused Muriel to have an avid interest in sterilization so she obtained her certificate in Sterilization and has taught many classes, given many lectures and instructed in processing, as well. Muriel has helped to set standards and achieved them for herself, her staff, ORNAC, processing, hospitals, RN's and physicians.

The following are a few highlights of her outstanding perioperative nursing career:

- **1984** – Chair of the first National Operating Room Nurses Association of Canada (ORNAC) Conference in Jasper, AB
  - In the early 1980's, Muriel worked very closely with Agnes Foster to create the *Canadian Operating Room Nurses Journal (CORNJ)* – please note that she continues to write for the journal in the CORL Corral!
  - **1986** – designed ORNAA pin
  - **1988** – assisted in creating ORNAC Post Basic course review program & curriculum
  - **1988** – was front & center in the creation of the first ORNAC Standards
  - **1990** – 1992 – ORNAC Secretary
  - **1991** – Chair of exhibitors for the ORNAC National Conference, Banff, AB
  - **1991** – received the Isabelle Adams Excellence in Perioperative Nursing Award
  - **1995** – assisted in the creation of the perioperative certification (CPN(C)) with the CNA & has maintained her certification
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- **2001** – recipient of the ORNAC/Johnson & Johnson Drake-Thompson Writing Award
- represented perioperative nursing practice for many years with the Canadian Standards Association
- Co-Chair and founding member of the Canadian Operating Room Leaders Network (CORL)

Ms. Shewchuk, also a part time consultant, provides expertise in surgical nursing practice, administration, planning and surgical suite design, work flow, legal issues, administrative issues and problem resolution. Muriel has consulted in twenty hospitals over seven provinces and two territories as well as Puerto Rico and London, England. In addition she has provided consultation to private sector physicians for design, development and operations of non-hospital surgical suites. Muriel is also an advisor to the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons for standards and monitoring of private sector surgical suites.

Ms. Shewchuk is one of three original authors for the (1986), *Professional, Technical and Competency Standards* for ORNAC. She has been a presenter at 6 world OR conferences and is a frequent speaker at national and provincial OR and leadership conferences. Leadership articles, written by Muriel, are regularly published in the *Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal (CORNJ)*. The *CORNJ* is now known as the *ORNAC Journal*.

Ms. Shewchuk is acknowledged at the local, provincial and national level for excellence in practice, education, and leadership. She has been the recipient of many awards including: Isabelle Adams Excellence in Perioperative Nursing Award – ORNAC; Lifetime Achievement – Alberta Association of Registered Nurses; and the ORNAC/Johnson & Johnson Drake-Thompson Writing Award.

Ms. Shewchuk was a co-presenter with her longtime pal Gloria Stephens at the 25<sup>th</sup> National ORNAC Conference, *Harnessing Our Power* in Niagara Falls, ON. in 2017. This was a plenary session on Monday, May 1, 2017, *Evolution of ORNAC Standards of Practice, Competencies and Certification, "Perseverance to Professional Excellence"*, which was then published in the December 2017, *ORNAC Journal* as an article. This presentation with her "pal" Gloria Stephens and the subsequent submission of their presentation as an article were the last two contributions Muriel made to ORNAC and perioperative nursing. She is will be missed by her family and friends

Ms Shewchuk passed away May 11, 2017 in Calgary AB. She will be missed by the global perioperative nursing community and by her "nursing" families. One of the most moving tributes to a perioperative nurse was the honour guard formed to salute Muriel prior to her final resting place; it was "her" perioperative nurses from Calgary who dressed in OR attire lined the path from funeral to hearse. A truly moving tribute and a very fitting finish to her life, career in nursing and ceremony.



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The following quote is from an article published in the first edition of the *Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal (CORNJ)*, which Muriel wrote. It is as true today as it was in 1983! The quote is from her editorial *Gold Fish in a Bowl*.

“It behooves every operating room nurse to strive to be the bright shiny gold fish in a bowl because of the tremendous overall effect on everyone including the patient”.

Please feel free to read the tribute to Muriel and her article *Gold Fish in a Bowl* published in the September 2017 ORNAC Journal the article was based on tributes offered at Muriel's funeral May 17, 2017 in Calgary.

**NOTE:** *Gold Fish in a Bowl* was December 2017 ORNAC Journal in loving memory of Muriel Shewchuk (October 11, 1940-May 11, 2017).

### **References**

Mary Knight & Margaret Farley, (2017). Tribute to Muriel Shewchuk, ORNAC Journal, 35(3):50-52.

Stephens, Gloria & Shewchuk, Muriel, (2017). Evolution of ORNAC standards of practice, competencies and certification, “Perseverance to professional excellence”, ORNAC Journal, 35(4):70-74.

Shewchuk, Muriel (1983). Gold fish in a bowl, Canadian Operating Room Nursing Journal, 1(1):13-14.

And republished in the December 2017 ORNAC Journal in loving memory of Muriel Shewchuk October 11, 1940-May 11, 2017.

### **Quote from Muriel's article, Gold fish in a bowl**

“It behooves every operating room nurse to strive to be the bright shiny gold fish in a bowl because of the tremendous overall effect on everyone including the patient” (p. 53).