



In This issue:

- 📖 Education Roundup
- 📖 Judith Berry Perioperative Nurse Excellence Award
- 📖 ACORN Standards Spotlight
- 📖 Conferences Around Australia and the Globe
- 📖 ACORN Webinars
- 📖 Behind the Mask: Riverland General Hospital
- 📖 Upcoming SAPNA Sessions
- 📖 Vale Carmel Rodgers

EDUCATION ROUNDUP

Interactive Hands on with J&J Med Tech

We extend our sincere thanks to J&J MedTech for hosting an outstanding hands-on learning session at their Kent Town headquarters on 22 February.

In an intimate, small group setting, our members experienced an excellent environment for hands-on learning, gaining valuable insights into Advanced Energy, Advanced Wound Closure, Haemostasis Optimisation, and Surgical Stapling.



Online Education session



Be the Change You Want to See in Staff & Patient Safety: *The Story of the Rider & the Elephant*

Our first inaugural online webinar occurred on 18th March with a collaboration with StaffandPatientSafety.org

The webinar was titled: *Be the change you want to see in Staff & Patient Safety: The story of the Rider & the Elephant.*

The recent presentation, though attended by a smaller group of members, proved to be both insightful and engaging. The discussion offered valuable perspectives and sparked meaningful conversations on the topic at hand. Those who participated contributed thoughtfully, making the session a rewarding experience despite the limited turnout. We appreciate the involvement of those who joined. Our members learnt of the key barriers and facilitators for the successful implementation of projects to improve perioperative staff safety, how to prepare a change management project based on these recommendations and evaluate the effectiveness of the changes to ensure sustainable change is maintained.

Thank you to the team from StaffandPatientSafety.org, Dr Michael Sinnott, Dr Chamindika Konara and Dr Shreya Singh for their presentation.

Judith Berry Perioperative Nurse Excellence Award

Every year the Judith Berry Award is awarded to a Nurse who has demonstrated excellence in Perioperative Nursing in relation to Care, Vision and Excellence. The Award is a \$500 monetary prize to be used in furtherance of the winner's perioperative career, professional development, study or research including travel costs and personal expenses related to supporting these activities. You may self-nominate or nominate a worthy colleague.

For 2025, this Award has been doubled to **\$1000!!!**

Please see our website for details and to download an application form. Nominations will be judged by a SAPNA Awards sub-committee and the winner announced at the SAPNA State Conference in September.



A Life Behind the Mask: The Journey of Judith Berry

Judith's remarkable nursing career began early, at the age of sixteen, when she took her first steps into healthcare as a Cadet Nurse at a regional hospital. It was during her student placement in the Operating Room (OR) that she found her true calling — a passion so strong that all other career plans quickly fell away. Upon graduation, she requested a permanent position in the OR, a decision that puzzled many of her friends but set the course for a lifelong dedication to perioperative nursing.

Seeking new challenges, Judith moved to Liverpool, UK, where she worked at a major emergency Level 1 Trauma hospital — a sprawling institution with over 11,000 beds, serving a vast catchment area from the Lake District to Birmingham, Wales, and Northern Ireland. This was a period marked by bomb scares during The Troubles, frequent trauma emergencies, and the tumultuous Toxteth Riots. Amidst this intense and diverse environment, Judith discovered her enthusiasm for Neurosurgery, working with both adult and paediatric patients.

Her journey later took her to South Australia, where she joined the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH). Compared to the chaos of Liverpool, the RAH initially felt calm. Over the years, Judith rose through the ranks, ultimately becoming the Nursing Director of OR Services. In this leadership role, she championed innovation and improvement, trialling many advances she had encountered through the National Association of Theatre Nurses (NATN) in the UK — from Custom Packs and Sharps Disposal Systems to Container Case Carts and disposable curtains. None of this change would have been possible, Judith notes, without the support of hospital administration, dedicated staff, and partnerships with medical representatives and their companies.

Judith's contributions were formally recognized when she was awarded the status of **Emeritus Nurse** upon her retirement from the RAH — a true mark of distinction.

Always committed to education and research, Judith pursued a Doctorate in Nursing Science, focusing on the critical, yet often overlooked, role of OR table mattresses in the development of pressure sores. Her work led to important changes in mattress composition, improving patient outcomes not just during surgery, but well into recovery on the wards.

After leaving the RAH, Judith returned to Aged Care — a sector she describes as a "step back in time" where the fundamentals of nursing care remain constant. Never one to stand still, three years ago she embarked on yet another academic journey, enrolling in a Degree in Theology at the University of Divinity — a pursuit aimed at keeping her "grey cells" active and engaged.

Throughout her career, Judith has been a tireless advocate for the often-invisible work of perioperative nurses — the unsung heroes behind the closed doors of the OR. Her leadership extended beyond her clinical roles, serving on the **ACORN Board** from 1995 to 1998, holding the position of **ACORN President** from 1998 to 2000, and remaining involved until 2002. Judith also served as **President and committee member of SAPNA**, leaving an indelible mark on both organizations.

Reflecting on her journey, Judith expresses profound gratitude for the opportunities she has had to care for patients and hopes that new generations of perioperative nurses will find the same fulfillment in this often overlooked, yet vital, branch of nursing.



ACORN STANDARDS – SPOTLIGHT ON ANAESTHETIC GAS POLLUTION

Did you know that the ACORN standards now cover Anaesthetic Gas Pollution and Planetary Health?

The Anaesthetic Gas Pollution standard reflects the latest evidence and best practices for minimising the risks associated with anaesthetic gases in the operating room. This standard is aligned with ACORN's new Planetary Health position statement, as a key component of the broader commitment to environmental sustainability in the perioperative field.

Why Anaesthetic Gas Pollution Matters

Anaesthetic gases are vital for safe and effective patient care. However, these gases can also contribute to environmental pollution and, if not properly managed, may pose health risks for both operating room staff and patients.

Key Recommendations from the Updated Guideline

- **Risk Awareness**

Local policies and procedures should cover all WHS implications of anaesthetic gas usage, and all staff should be aware of the risks and controls in place.

- **Scavenging Systems**

Utilise and maintain effective gas scavenging systems to reduce exposure, minimising both health and environmental risks. Adequacy of air-conditioning also has a large part to play in minimising the effects of anaesthetic gases within the operating theatre.

- **Equipment Maintenance and Best Practices**

Regular maintenance of anaesthetic equipment to prevent unintended release of anaesthetic gases. Air conditioners and scavenging systems should be regularly and correctly maintained.

- **Sustainable Practices**

ACORN's updated position integrates a broader focus on environmental sustainability. The guideline explores how perioperative teams can take steps toward greener practices by reducing waste and lowering the environmental footprint associated with anaesthetic gases.

The updated position on anaesthetic gas pollution is not only about reducing potential hazards in the operating room; it also reinforces ACORN's commitment to driving sustainable change in perioperative care. By incorporating the latest research and evidence-based strategies, the guideline aims to protect the health of both patients and staff while contributing to a lower environmental impact.

What This Means for You

For perioperative nurses, staying informed about updates to clinical guidelines is critical. All SAPNA members have access to the ACORN standards on the ACORN website or the Member Jungle app to make it easier to access the standards at any time.

We recommend that everyone read through both the Planetary Health and Anaesthetic Gas Pollution standards and consider how we can adapt in our workplaces to meet these standards. Most hospitals now have Environmental or Sustainability workgroup, so if this is an area of interest for you, you could consider bringing suggestions for quality improvements around anaesthetic gas pollution to your workplace.



..... GUIDELINE UPDATE

ANAESTHETIC GAS POLLUTION



www.acorn.org.au/guidelines

Conferences around Australia and the Globe

At SAPNA, we are committed to providing exceptional educational opportunities for our members. To support ongoing learning and professional development, we are pleased to share both local and international opportunities that align with your educational goals.

Looking ahead, we aim to promote not only our own committee and educational initiatives but also those of other organizations relevant to Perioperative Nursing.

This month, we are excited to highlight the **International Conference for PeriAnaesthesia Nurses (ICPAN 2025)**, taking place in **Dublin, Ireland**, from **September 10–12, 2025**.

As a reminder, members with a minimum of two years' membership are eligible to apply for study grants to support their educational pursuits.

The poster features a teal background on the left and a green shamrock pattern on the right. It includes the logo of the Irish Anaesthetic and Recovery Nurses Association, the ICPAN logo, and text announcing the 7th International Conference for Perianaesthesia Nurses, titled 'Embracing Diverse Global Perianaesthesia Practices', held from 10-12 September 2025 in Dublin, Ireland.



7th International Conference for
Perianaesthesia Nurses



Embracing Diverse Global
Perianaesthesia Practices

10 - 12 September 2025

Shake Your Shamrocks
with international colleagues in Dublin, Ireland!



SAVE THE DATE

ACORN is pleased to announce that the 2026 ACORN International Conference will be held at the Brisbane Convention Centre from 14-16 May 2026.

Our theme, **Building Bridges: Strengthening collaborative perioperative care**, highlights the vital role of teamwork and partnership in the perioperative setting. It underscores the importance of forging strong connections—both within our professional community and beyond—to enhance patient care, share knowledge, and drive innovation together.

More information, abstract submissions and registrations coming soon.



TNA SA/NT Branch Education Day

Wednesday 3rd July 2024

8.00am– 3.30pm

**Flinders Medical Centre
Lecture Theatre 3 Level 5**

Building a bridge: Overcoming barriers in transplantation

Including:

- Growing Kidneys—Professor Jonathan Gleadle
- Immunosuppression & Transplant— Mr Daniel Gregg
- Donate Life Case Study— Mr Nigel Palk
- Lung transplant case study—Ms Laura Sadler
- Liver Transplant case study— Ms Libby John
- Heart failure—Ms Natalie Simpson

TNA members: FREE

Non members \$60.00

Registration includes morning tea and lunch

Kindly supported by



RSVP: Monday 24th June 2024

Workshop enquiries and registration forms please contact:

Nicole Williams - SA/NT TNA secretary

email: nicole.williams@sa.gov.au



TNA Major Partners





TRANSPLANT
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2025 National Conference

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Inspiration and Education Leads to Innovation

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Ruby Geddes

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www.transplantnurses.org.au

ACPAN Upcoming Events

Check out the Australasian College of Perianaesthesia Nurses (ACPAN) website- acpan.edu.au

They have a number of upcoming events relevant to all anaesthetic nurses!

Upcoming Events

7 May 2025: [ACPAN Sustainability Webinar - Nurses Six Step Plan](#)

13 May 2025: [Webinar: Accidentally on Purpose - Improving Arthroplasty Care](#)

27 May 2025: [ACPAN Q&A](#)

20 Aug 2025: [ACPAN Sustainability Webinar - The role of suppliers](#)

26 Aug 2025: [ACPAN Q&A](#)

10-12 Sep 2025: [ICPAN 7th International Conference for Perianaesthesia Nurses](#)

15 Oct 2025: [Webinar: Blood Reclaimed - The Power of Cell Salvage](#)

12 Nov 2025: [ACPAN Sustainability Webinar - Environmental sustainability audits and product environmental footprint \(PEF\) evaluations](#)

25 Nov 2025: [ACPAN Q&A](#)

7-9 May 2026: [15th World Congress of Nurse Anaesthetists](#)



ACORN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF
PERIOPERATIVE NURSES

Just a reminder—being a SAPNA member means you're also part of ACORN! That gives you access to a range of webinars throughout the year, all aimed at helping perioperative nurses with their professional development. These online sessions are run by fellow perioperative nurses and clinical experts from different specialties, and you can tune in from the comfort of your home. Missed one? No problem—they're all recorded and available on demand. Check them out on the ACORN website: <https://www.acorn.org.au/webinars>

Jun
28

ACORN Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Date: Saturday 28th Jun 2025 12:01 AM - 11:59 PM

Details: Time to be confirmed. [Read More...](#)

Aug
8

VPNG State Conference

Date: Friday 8th Aug 2025 9:00 AM - Saturday 9th Aug 2025 5:00 PM

Details: Victorian Perioperative Nurses Group State Conference Innovation and excellence: Leading the future in perioperative nursing [Read More...](#)

Aug
15

Northern Territory Perioperative Nurse Conference 2025

Date: Friday 15th Aug 2025 8:00 AM - Saturday 16th Aug 2025 5:00 PM

Location: Darwin City

Details: Innovations in Perioperative Nursing, Hilton Darwin, NT [Read More...](#)

Oct
11

ACORN QLD Conference 2025

Date: Saturday 11th Oct 2025 8:00 AM - Sunday 12th Oct 2025 1:00 PM

Location: Gold Coast

Details: Rediscover the Magic! This year's theme, Rediscover the Magic, invites attendees to be inspired and enlightened as we explore the latest innovations in perioperative nursing practice. Join us for a weekend of connection, collaboration, and learning as we come together to refresh and reset. [Read More...](#)

May
14

ACORN 2026 Conference

Date: Thursday 14th May 2026 10:30 AM - Saturday 16th May 2026 5:00 PM

Details: Building Bridges: Strengthening collaborative perioperative care [Read More...](#)

Behind the Mask: Showcasing our Teams

As part of an exciting new initiative, the SAPNA Committee is proud to showcase perioperative teams from across our beautiful state. For our Autumn newsletter, we are highlighting the dedicated team from the Riverland General Hospital, who are highlighting their specialised team and service.

If you would like to see your team featured in an upcoming edition and have your photo included in our newsletter, please contact Katie Morgan at secretary@sapna.org.au.

Riverland General Hospital

Riverland General Hospital is part of the Northern Local Health Services, we service the surrounding areas, which include other towns, being Renmark, Bamera, Loxton, Waikerie and many other smaller towns.

Here at the Riverland General Hospital, we pride ourselves on providing a comprehensive and thorough service to our patients. Being a medium sized country hospital, we need to ensure our demographic is provided with a range of different surgical specialties to cover all types of needs.

We have three full sized theatres that all contain up to date technological features and we continue to keep up to date with new information as it occurs. Most days we have all three theatres running concurrently which can lead to some pretty busy days. We have seven visiting surgeons covering Orthopaedics, Ophthalmology, Urology, Plastics, Vascular, ENT and Oral Surgery. In addition to that we have two general surgeons and one resident gynaecological surgeon. All of these offer a wide variety of procedures whilst they are here as well as having consultation days.

Our recovery area included seven PACU one beds and six PACU two chairs. We also provide one infusion day a week that is tended to by recovery staff. These chairs can also be used for PACU two overflow.

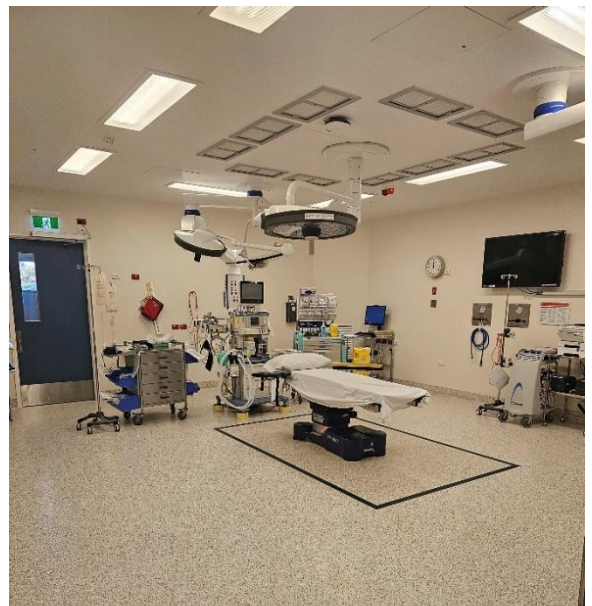
Our CSSD has recently had an upgrade with the extension of its facility area, including an upgrade of the Atherton sterilizers and new washers. Our CSSD staff do a fabulous job keeping up with the workload, without them we could not do the work that we do!

As a teaching hospital our theatres provide many learning opportunities for all types of students including medical and physiotherapy. But it is our dedication to our nursing students where we excel. We have a dedicated Theatre clinical facilitator to provide professional guidance to a large cohort of students throughout the year. Our staff are wonderful mentors and love to teach up and coming nurses.

An on-call service is provided, with three staff on call for a period of twenty-four hours at a time. One of those nurses is also a dedicated trauma nurse who is on call to cover any emergencies in the ED that may require intubation and assistance for whatever the anaesthetist may need.

Being in the country means that we must be multi skilled and we are very proud of the fact that our staff can work across all areas of the perioperative environment including anaesthetics, scrub, scout, PACU, admissions and team leader roles.

We are a small unit compared to others that may be around (we have around 35 staff members) but we promote a great sense of community and family, organising social occasions outside of work and supporting each other whenever needed. It can be pretty chaotic at times, but we love being country nurses and wouldn't have it any other way.



****Vale Carmel Rodgers****



And finally, we remember with love and gratitude the beautiful life of Carmel Rodgers, who passed away in April after a brief illness. Carmel was a cherished life member of SAPNA, whose unwavering dedication to Perioperative Nursing, SAPNA, and ACORN left an enduring legacy.

More than her contributions, it was Carmel's warmth, kindness, and infectious joy that made her truly unforgettable. She had a rare gift for making everyone feel seen, valued, and cared for—leaving gentle imprints on the hearts of all who knew her.

As we reflect on the love and laughter she brought into our lives, may we find comfort in those precious memories and honour her by living with the same compassion and generosity she showed every day.

Rest peacefully, dear Carmel. You will be deeply missed, but your spirit will forever shine in the hearts of those you touched.



SAPNA STATE CONFERENCE • 2025

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