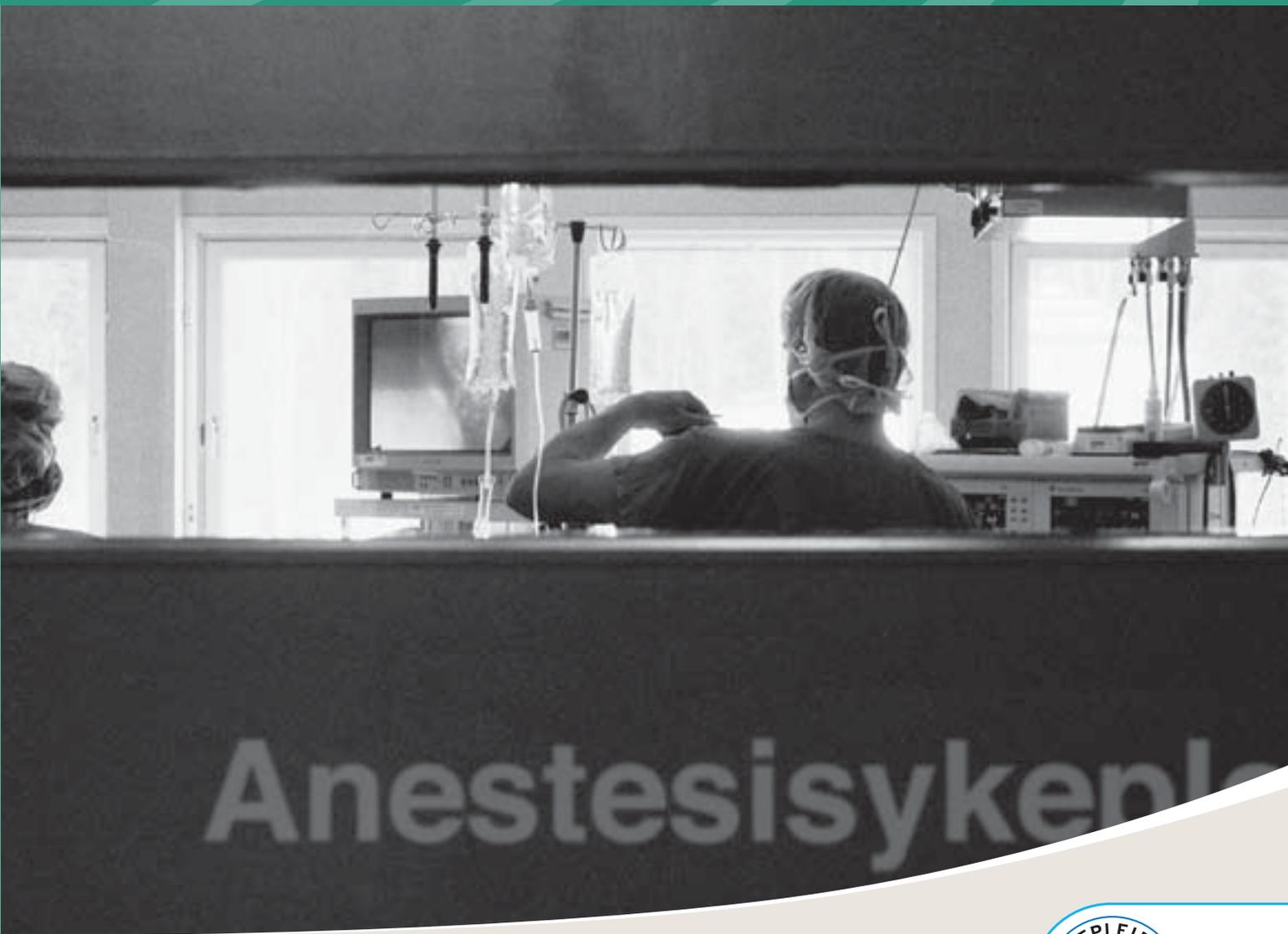


ALWAYS PRESENT...



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A Nurse Anesthetist Leaflet

The Norwegian Nurses Association and the Norwegian Association of Nurse Anesthetists



A BRIEF HISTORY

Nurses started giving general anesthetics to patients as early as the end of the 19th century. In those days, medical responsibility lay with the surgeon but, naturally, he could not provide anesthetics while performing surgery at the same time. Therefore, nurses took



care of the patient's cardinal needs by keeping him or her asleep and, above all, alive during surgery.

Back then, ether and chloroform were the most widely used anesthetics. Nurses developed general anesthesia into a craft that required high levels of qualification, characterised by knowledge, observational expertise and skills.

In Norway, the first anesthesiologists were educated towards the end of the 1940s.

With the introduction of new medication, sophisticated anesthesia apparatus and the ability to treat several diseases, anesthesio-

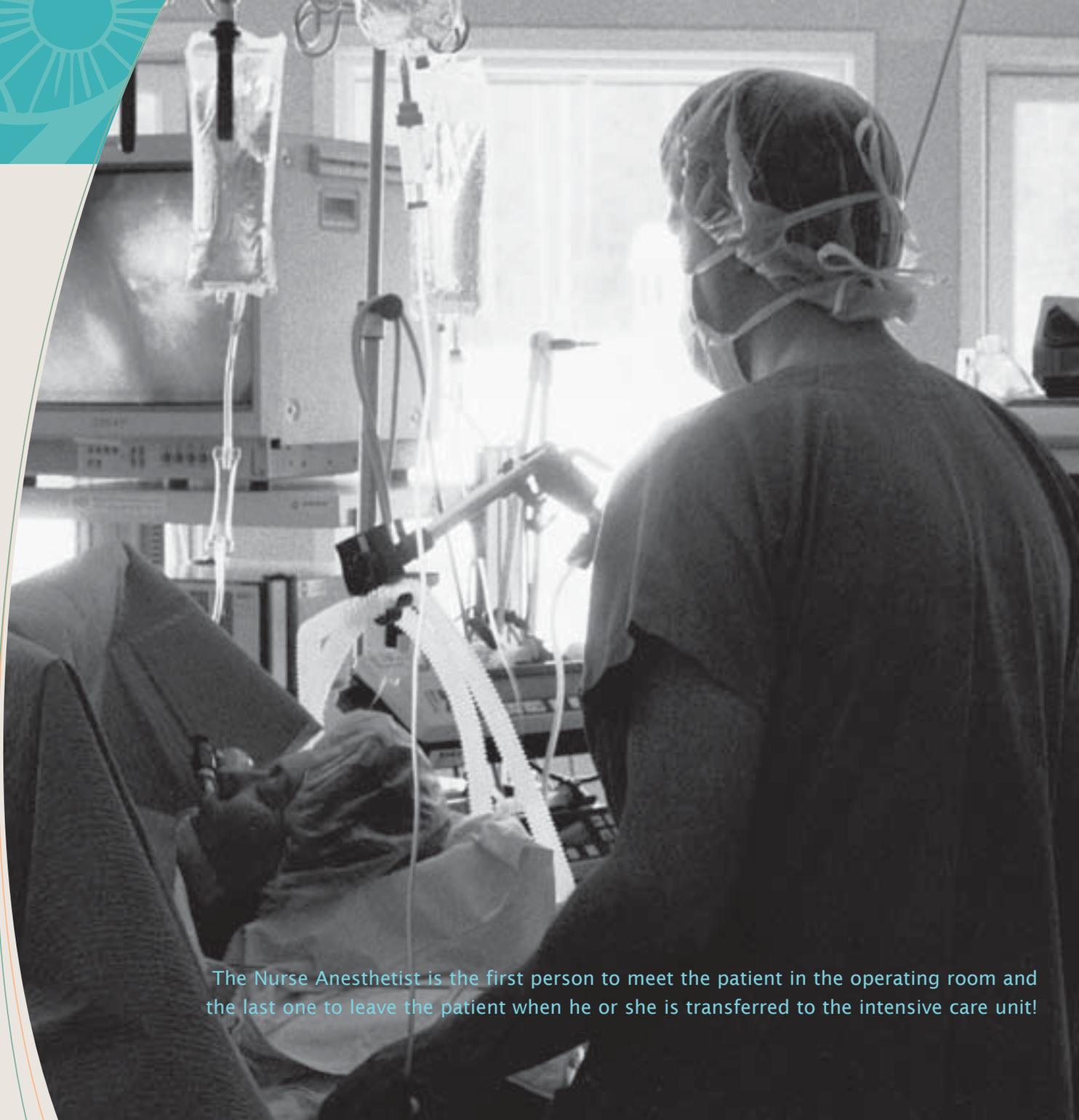
logy became a medical category of its own in the aftermath of WWII.

In Norway, formal

higher education of Nurse Anesthetists has taken place since 1965.

A national framework syllabus covering three terms was approved by The Ministry of Church, Education and Research in 1999.

The Nurse Anesthetist is the first person to meet the patient in the operating room and the last one to leave the patient when he or she is transferred to the intensive care unit.



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WHAT IS ANESTHESIA?

In Norway, two occupational groups have anesthesia education – anesthesiologists and Nurse Anesthetists. The formal educations of the two groups differ, but they overlap and complement each other in everyday work. Norwegian general anesthesia standards (Standard for anestesi i Norge) are recommended guidelines for anesthesia practice, jointly developed by the Norwegian Association of Anesthesiologists (Norsk Anestesiologisk Forening) and The Norwegian Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

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How to Become a Nurse Anesthetist

In order to start training for anesthesia nursing, you have to be a registered nurse. Then, two years of practice are required before you can begin higher anesthesia nursing education. Education lasts three full-time terms and once you have passed the exam, you receive the title Nurse Anesthetist.





WHAT DOES THE NURSE ANESTHETIST DO?

Anesthesia nursing is to apply nursing and anesthesia practice in a responsible and determined manner in order to prepare for surgery and other treatment.

In effect, this means that the nurse anesthetist:

- gathers information by talking to the patient and reading his or her journal
- assesses blood samples and other tests
- assesses the patient's medication and how this will affect the choice of anesthetics
- collects additional diseases information
- based on the planned surgery and treatment, and together with anesthesiologist, assesses choice of anesthesia method with regards to the patient's needs and wishes
- starts, maintains and ends general anesthesia together with other qualified personnel by using various combinations of intravenous, inhalation and regional anesthesia for ASA grade I and II patients
- administers anesthesia together with anesthesiologist for ASA grade III and IV patients
- opens and maintains respiratory passage during anesthesia and when treating comatose patients with resuscitators by means of mask, tube, larynx mask or similar instruments
- during anesthesia, administers medicine with analgesic, hypnotic and sedative effects as well as muscle-relaxing medication
- can assess the patient's liquid balance and potential need for infusion and transfusion therapy
- looks after the needs of children and parents based on a thorough understanding of children's special needs and reaction patterns, and, furthermore, provides guidance and establishes a safe environment
- includes the relatives in preparations for anesthesia, informs them continuously and looks after them during first-stage anesthesia for their child
- can start, maintain and end anesthesia for children together with the anesthesiologist
- has acquired knowledge of anatomy, physiology and the effects of medication
- masters technical skills such as intubation, insertion of peripheral intravenous cannulae and ventilation of mask and intubation





The Nurse Anesthetist works together with a wide range of other occupational groups in a team. According to Act relating to health personnel (Lov om helsepersonell), superior medical responsibility lies with the doctor. Today, in most Norwegian hospitals, it is customary for the Nurse Anesthetist to be present with the patient at all times and to administer anesthesia.

This work calls for close cooperation between the two occupational groups and a high level of skills is required by members of both groups in order to carry out anesthesia in a responsible way.



WHERE DOES THE NURSE ANESTHETIST WORK?



- Main work area is in hospitals where patients need anesthesia for planned surgery
- In emergencies, the Nurse Anesthetist is part of a team which performs advanced resuscitation and stabilising treatment when vital organs fail
- In all Norwegian health regions, nurse anesthetists participate in prehospital work, i.e. work outside of the hospital, emergency call-outs, transportation and reception of critically ill patients. The number of nurse anesthetists participating in such activities varies from hospital to hospital
- The Nurse Anesthetist is a vital part of the medical disaster preparedness
- The Nurse Anesthetist is a natural participant in treatment teams for patients with acute and chronic pains
- Other possible fields of work are in industries with high emergency preparedness and where the demand for independent work in acute situations, e.g. in offshore work and various forms of international relief work, is high

The Nurse Anesthetist is also a part of:

- disaster teams during major accidents and disasters domestic and abroad
- armed forces and voluntary organisations teams abroad
- offshore medical teams
- pain therapy teams

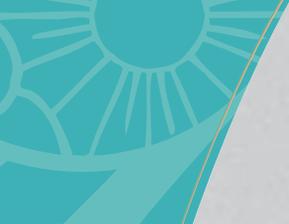


ALWAYS PRESENT...

The Nurse Anesthetist is always present:

- when you are to undergo surgery or an assessment that requires general anesthesia
- when you are to give birth and need a Caesarean section
- when critically injured patients arrive at the hospital
- when critically ill patients arrive at the hospital
- during resuscitation attempts at hospitals
- during call-outs in emergency situations
- during in-house transport of critically ill patients, and transportation between hospitals when the patient is critically ill or traumatized





ALWAYS PRESENT...



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The leaflet is created by the Norwegian Association of Nurse Anesthetists and photographer is Marte Kruse.



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