

**THE BEST SECRET IN HEALTHCARE**



**PRESENTATION GUIDE**

# Tips on Generating Local Publicity

Publicity is an important element in increasing understanding and perception about the nurse anesthetist. The objective is to make people aware of your role and encourage them to request a nurse anesthetist when they require surgery.

Public speaking alone will not generate the level of public exposure necessary to reach the entire community unless you promote it. Working with the media, the impact of your awareness efforts will extend far beyond the actual contacts you make during a presentation.

The most efficient and cost effective way to reach a large audience is through “earned media” – that is positive press you actively work to get. By creating newsworthy stories or events, you can generate effective media coverage that targets specific audiences.

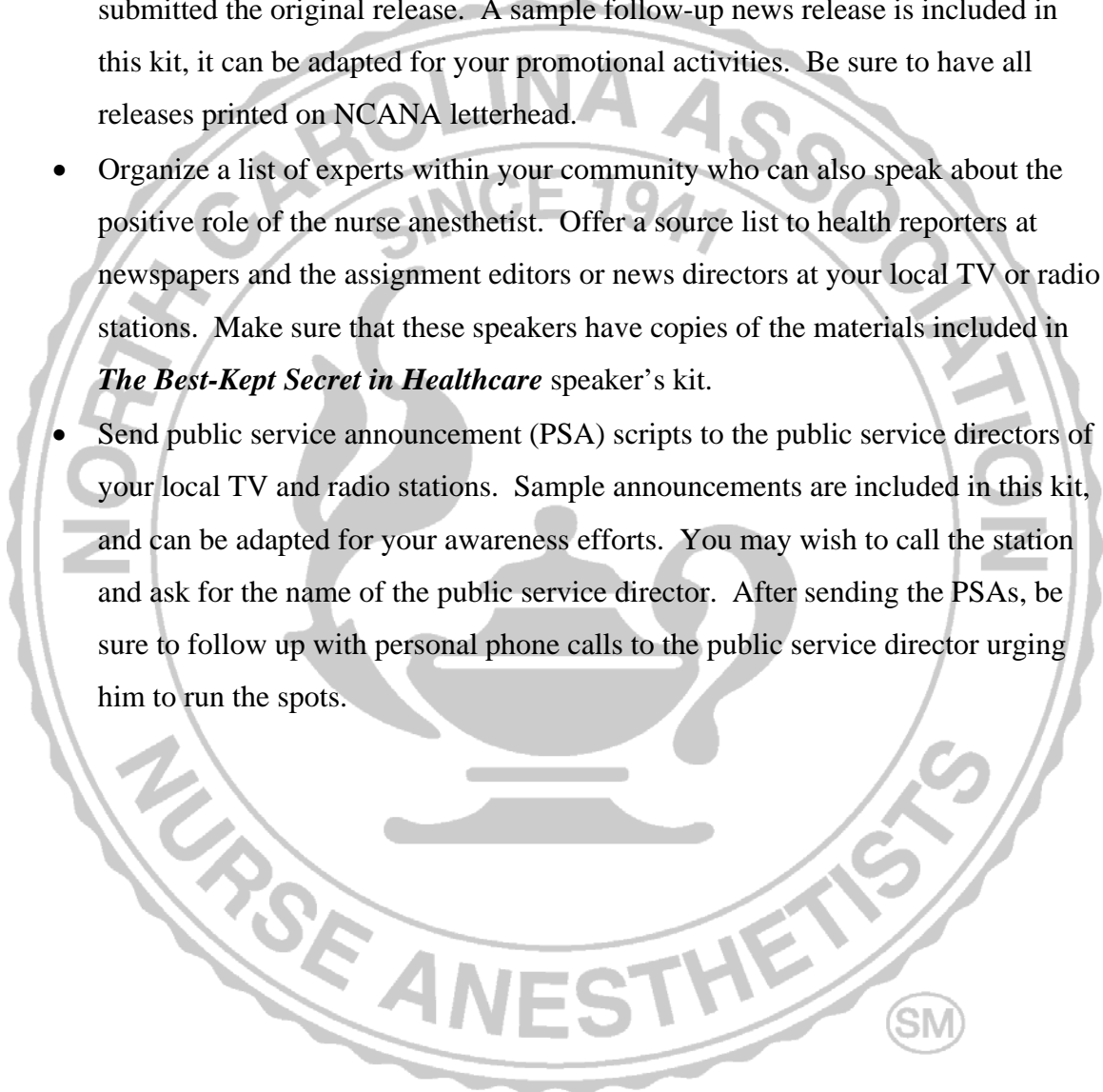
*The Best-Kept Secret in Healthcare*, an educational videotape developed by the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists, is an excellent resource to use in awareness and recruitment presentations to civic organizations, healthcare and school groups, and local businesses. Use the enclosed speech and videotape to educate your audience about the nurse anesthetist and the critical role you play in the healthcare delivery system.

Then, distribute copies of the Q&A, testimonials, and fact sheet as background material.

The following tips will help you generate publicity about your presentation on *The Best-Kept Secret in Healthcare*.

- Write articles for publication in your community’s medical, nursing, hospital or educational publications that include information on when you will be giving *The Best-Kept Secret in Healthcare* presentation. If the organization to which you will be presenting has a public relations department, ask them to help prepare and send the releases at least two weeks in advance.

- Develop relationships with media professionals. Get to know the reporters that cover feature, healthcare, medical, and general beats. Keep them up to date on NCANA events and accomplishments.
- Make sure that the information is submitted for publication in the ANETIC. After the presentation, follow up with details to all publications to which you have submitted the original release. A sample follow-up news release is included in this kit, it can be adapted for your promotional activities. Be sure to have all releases printed on NCANA letterhead.
- Organize a list of experts within your community who can also speak about the positive role of the nurse anesthetist. Offer a source list to health reporters at newspapers and the assignment editors or news directors at your local TV or radio stations. Make sure that these speakers have copies of the materials included in *The Best-Kept Secret in Healthcare* speaker's kit.
- Send public service announcement (PSA) scripts to the public service directors of your local TV and radio stations. Sample announcements are included in this kit, and can be adapted for your awareness efforts. You may wish to call the station and ask for the name of the public service director. After sending the PSAs, be sure to follow up with personal phone calls to the public service director urging him to run the spots.



## Questions & Answers

### Answers to Common Questions About Nurse Anesthesia

#### *What is Nurse Anesthesia?*

Nurse anesthesia is an advanced clinical nursing specialty of trained and licensed professionals who administer anesthesia in a healthcare setting. In the administration of anesthesia, certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) perform similar functions as anesthesiologists.

#### *What is Anesthesia?*

Anesthesia is a safe and effective means of alleviating pain during nearly every type of medical procedure. There are three basic types:

- General anesthesia produces a loss of sensation throughout the entire body.
- Regional anesthesia produces a loss of sensation to a specific region of the body.
- Local anesthesia produced a loss of sensation to a small, specific area of the body.

#### *In what healthcare settings do CRNAs practice?*

CRNAs administer anesthesia to patients in collaboration with a surgeon, anesthesiologist, dentist, podiatrist, or other qualified healthcare professionals. They provide anesthetics anywhere in the medical community where obstetrical, surgical and trauma stabilization is required.

#### *How does a CRNA differ from an anesthesiologist?*

There is little difference between the role of a CRNA and an anesthesiologist in the actual administration of anesthesia during the course of surgery. CRNAs are prepared to administer all types of anesthesia (general, regional, selected local, and conscious sedation), use all currently available anesthesia and adjunct drugs, determine need and manage fluid and blood therapy. In addition, they monitor and interpret data from sophisticated monitoring devices, insert invasive catheters (intravenous, central venous, and pulmonary artery catheters) and recognize and correct complications that may occur during the course of anesthesia with the use of consultation. CRNAs also provide airway

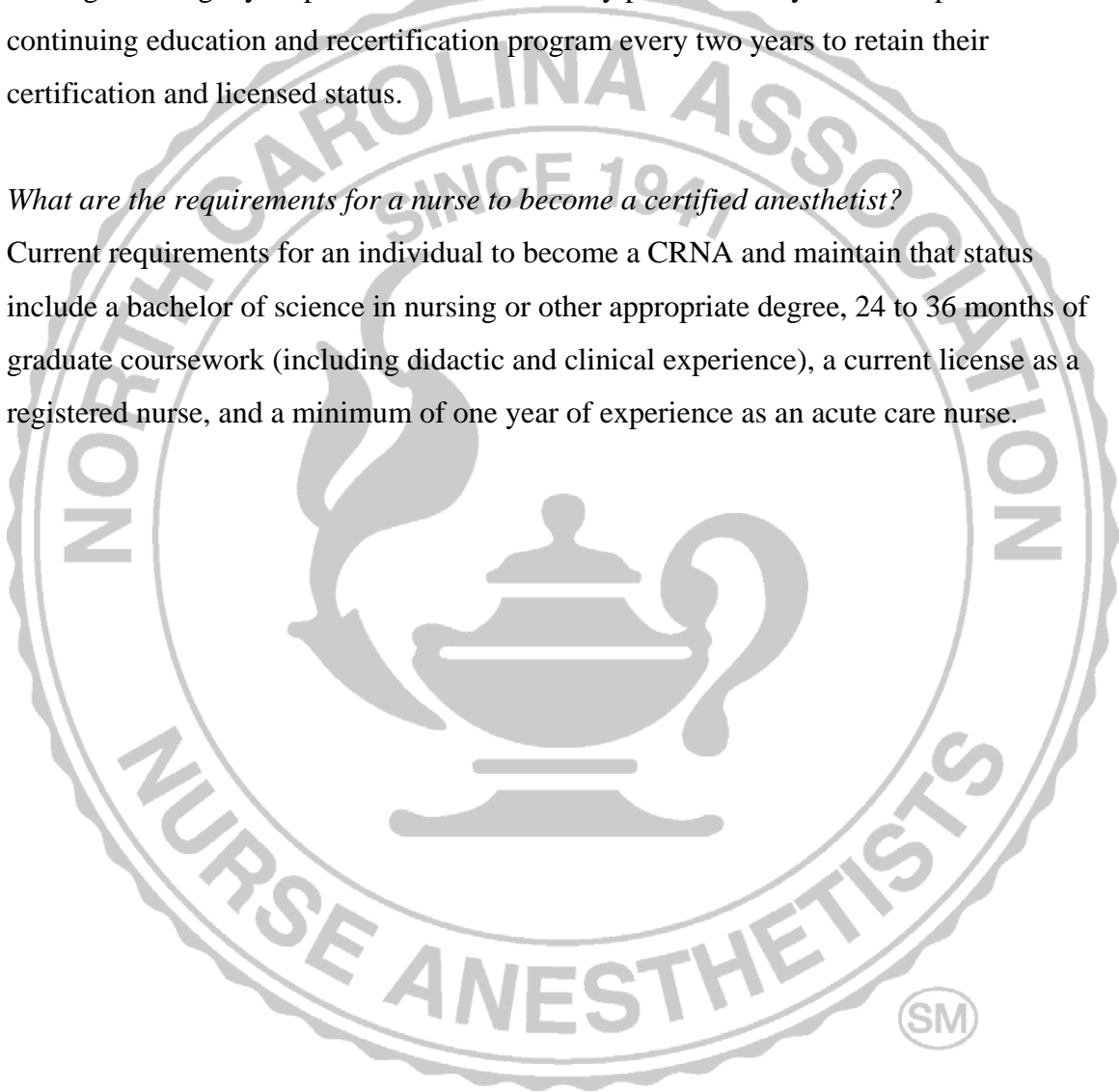
and ventilatory support, manage resuscitation efforts for cardiopulmonary arrest or serious injury, and provide pain management services.

*How are CRNAs regulated?*

CRNAs practice under their own licenses according to each state's Nurse Practice Act, making them legally responsible for the care they provide. They must complete a continuing education and recertification program every two years to retain their certification and licensed status.

*What are the requirements for a nurse to become a certified anesthetist?*

Current requirements for an individual to become a CRNA and maintain that status include a bachelor of science in nursing or other appropriate degree, 24 to 36 months of graduate coursework (including didactic and clinical experience), a current license as a registered nurse, and a minimum of one year of experience as an acute care nurse.



## Facts About Nurse Anesthetists

### *The Profession*

- Nurse anesthesia is an advanced clinical nursing specialty of trained and licensed professionals who administer anesthesia in a healthcare setting
- Certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) administer anesthesia to patients in collaboration with a surgeon, anesthesiologist, dentist, podiatrist, or other qualified healthcare professional.
- In their day-to-day work, CRNAs collaborate with physicians and make independent decisions in providing a full range of anesthesia care, from pre-anesthesia assessment and administration of sedatives to management of emergence and recovery from anesthesia.

### *Making an Impact*

- CRNAs are licensed to practice in every state in the nation and administer approximately 30 million anesthetic procedures in the United States each year.
- CRNAs are the sole anesthesia provider in more than two-thirds of the country's rural hospitals.
- CRNAs provide anesthetics anywhere in the medical community where obstetrical, surgical, and trauma stabilization is required.

### *What it Takes*

- It takes approximately eight years for a person to attain the CRNA certification and licensure. Applicants to nurse anesthesia educational programs are required to have:
  - A bachelor of science in nursing or another appropriate baccalaureate degree from an approved nursing program
  - A current license as a registered nurse
  - A minimum of one year acute care nursing experience

- Nurse anesthesia education programs require 24 to 36 months of graduate coursework. The program includes both didactic and clinical experiences.
- All nurse anesthesia education programs confer a master's degree in nursing, allied health, or biological and clinical sciences.
- Graduates of nurse anesthesia educational programs must pass a national certification exam to become CRNAs.



**North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists**

*Speakers Bureau Engagement Form*

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

NCANA Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Speaking Engagement: \_\_\_\_\_

Location/Directions: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of people expected: \_\_\_\_\_ Meal provided?    yes    no

Requested topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of presentation: \_\_\_\_\_ A/V needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Handout materials needed: \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists**

*Speakers Bureau Follow-Up Form to be Completed by Speaker*

NCANA Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time of Engagement: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of People in Attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the topic appropriate for the group?    yes    no

Was the topic well received by the group?    yes    no

Which A/V materials/equipment did you use? And, were they effective?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please describe how the group received the topic:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you field any questions that were particularly interesting? If so, please describe:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Does this group require follow-up or additional materials? If so, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide additional comments on the back if necessary. Return this completed form to NCANA.

## Sample Speech

(For use without the video)

I'm here today to tell you something that WILL make a difference to as many as 30 million men, women, and children each year. It could be a friend, an associate, or perhaps a member of your own family.

As I contemplate the people in this room, I am certain that more than two-thirds of you have had surgery at some point in your lifetime. Whether it was open-heart surgery or a relatively simple procedure, it was probably a significant experience in your life. Like many people, most of us take our good health for granted until we, or someone we love, faces a life-threatening illness, an injury, or even a cosmetic procedure. As we consider surgery, we begin to consider our options, including the experts who will provide critical services we will receive.

Like many people, one of the critical members of your surgical team could be the best-kept secret in healthcare. I am talking about the certified registered nurse anesthetist or CRNA.

I am [name] and I am a CRNA. I am joined by more than 2,400 CRNAs in North Carolina and more than 39,000 nationally. Together, we administer more than 30 million anesthetics each year in this country. So, chances are, if you've ever had surgery, the last face you saw as you drifted off to sleep belonged to either one of my colleagues or me. We watched over you while you slept to ensure your safety and comfort. We were the ones that were there when your surgery was completed, and were with you throughout your procedure.

While we sometimes work with anesthesiologists, frequently we are the primary anesthesia providers for surgeons, dentists, obstetricians, podiatrists, or other qualified healthcare professional. We practice in urban and rural settings. We are the primary anesthesia provider, the sole provider, in many rural settings. We are the main provider in the military, and some of us are independent contractors who work in a variety of settings. We are not assistants to anesthesiologists – on the contrary, in some settings we are the sole anesthesia provider, and in others we work in collaboration with anesthesiologists.

But there is one thing we all have in common: we are highly trained professionals, and it is our job to ensure that your anesthesia experience is a positive one.

So, who is this person who administers your anesthesia? Just how much training have they received? Why are they qualified to provide this service?

Nurse anesthesia is an advanced nursing profession with roots that trace back more than 150 years making it the first clinical nursing specialty. Nurses were the *first* professional group to provide anesthesia services in the United States. The discipline of nurse anesthesia developed in response to requests of surgeons seeking a solution to the high death rates attributed to anesthesia at that time. Surgeons saw nurses as a group of professionals who could give their undivided attention to patient care during surgical procedures. Serving as pioneers in anesthesia, nurse anesthetists have played a critical role in the advancement of the field.

We are responsible for strict standards to which each nurse anesthetist must adhere prior to embarking on a career in the administration of anesthesia, concluding in the earned designation of CRNA.

To reach the status of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist, or CRNA, an individual must be committed to eight years of preparation. The first four are spent earning a bachelor of science degree in nursing or a related field, followed by a year-long experience in an acute care setting, while applying for admission to an accredited nurse anesthesia program. Only the most qualified applicants are accepted.

Programs run from 24 to 36 months and include hands-on clinical and didactic (classroom) instruction in a variety of science and healthcare topics. Those who graduate are awarded a master's degree in nurse anesthesia and are well prepared for their career – having administered more than 800 anesthetics and logged more than 1,000 hours of hands-on clinical experience.

But before a nurse anesthetist can go to work, he or she must pass a rigorous national examination to become certified, thus earning the designation Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. And to keep that certification, CRNAs dedicate ourselves to life-long continuing education and must be evaluated every two years to maintain the certification.

As you can see, the demands are many, the recognition is scarce. And yet we continue. We continue because we enjoy what we do. We continue because of the extreme satisfaction our jobs provide. We continue because we know that we are making a difference in a person's overall quality of life. And we continue because we understand that there is value in what we do.

We recognize the importance of maintaining the price of healthcare without shortchanging the quality of patient care. The use of nurse anesthetists to administer anesthesia accomplishes both. We are a shining example of healthcare quality and cost control.

In fact, nurse anesthetists have become one of the best kept secrets in healthcare. As a group, and as individuals, we are working hard to become more recognized for who we are and what we do.

The next time you or a loved one face surgery, explore your options for your anesthetic needs. CRNAs are well trained, provide cost-effective services, and are dedicated not only to high professional standards but, more importantly, to the overall well-being of our patients.

During the surgical procedure, CRNAs will be by your side to answer your questions, ease your fears, and even hold your hand if you need a little extra reassurance. We'll be there when you go to sleep, closely monitor you throughout the entire procedure, and when you wake up you can be guaranteed that your nurse anesthetist will be there to see you on your way to recovery.

I'd like to thank each of you for being here and for allowing me an opportunity to increase awareness about CRNAs and our profession of providing anesthesia. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have about nurse anesthetists, CRNAs, or the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists.



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We recognize the importance of maintaining the price of healthcare without shortchanging the quality of patient care. The use of nurse anesthetists to administer anesthesia accomplishes both. We are a shining example of healthcare quality and cost control.

At this point, I'd like to share with you a powerful video, one that will help you better understand our role in the healthcare industry. The Best-Kept Secret in Healthcare is an educational program that explores the role of the CRNA and explains how we make a difference.

Let's take a look [show videotape].

The next time you or a loved one face surgery, explore your options for your anesthetic needs. CRNAs are well trained, provide cost-effective services, and are dedicated not only to high professional standards but, more importantly, to the overall well-being of our patients.

During the surgical procedure, CRNAs will be by your side to answer your questions, ease your fears, and even hold your hand if you need a little extra reassurance. We'll be there when you go to sleep, closely monitor you throughout the entire procedure, and when you wake up you can be guaranteed that your nurse anesthetist will be there to see you on your way to recovery.

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## Sample News Release

Media Contact: (name and phone no.)

For Immediate Release

### NC ASSOCIATION OF NURSE ANESTHETISTS REVEALS THE BEST-KEPT SECRET IN HEALTH CARE

In a stirring presentation today at [location of event], [presenter's name], CRNA and a member of the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists, challenged a group of [name of group in attendance] to seek information about nurse anesthetists when requiring surgery.

“Each year, nurse anesthetists administer more than 30 million anesthetics in this country, providing patient assessment, anesthesia administration, monitoring, and post-operative care,” s/he said. “The profession is more than 150 years old, the oldest advanced nursing practice in the country.”

Nurse anesthesia is an advanced clinical nursing specialty of trained and licensed professionals who administer anesthesia in a healthcare environment. Certified nurse anesthetists are licensed, professional registered nurses who have obtained certification as anesthesia nursing specialists through education in an accredited program and successful completion of a national certifying exam.

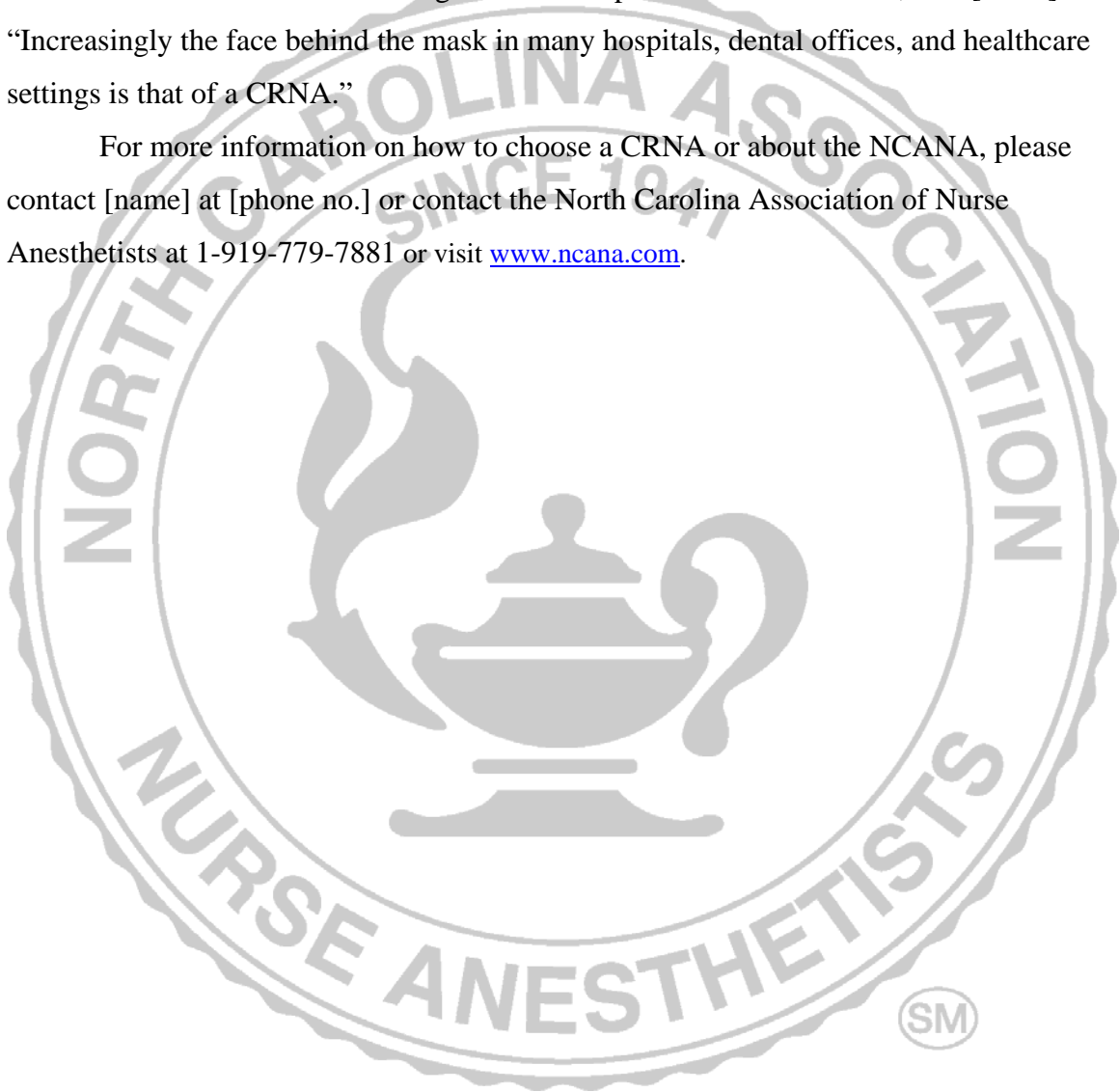
“Our role is to administer anesthesia to patients in collaboration with a surgeon, anesthesiologist, dentist, podiatrist, or other qualified healthcare professional,” said [name]. “CRNAs provide anesthetics anywhere in the medical community where obstetrical, surgical, and trauma stabilization is required.”

Currently, more than 39,000 nurse anesthetists are members of the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, the professional organization that represents CRNAs in the United States. In their day-to-day work, CRNAs collaborate with physicians, and, at the same time, are qualified to make independent decisions and provide the full range of anesthesia care, explained [name]. This care ranges from the pre-anesthesia assessment and administration of sedatives and analgesics to management of emergence and recovery from anesthesia.

[Name's] presentation included a powerful videotape featuring compelling testimony from nurse anesthetists and from doctors who work with this group of healthcare providers. *The Best-Kept Secret in Healthcare*, the 8-minute videotape produced by the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists, also explained the role of the CRNA during surgical procedures.

“Nurse anesthesia is no longer the best kept secret in healthcare”, said [name]. “Increasingly the face behind the mask in many hospitals, dental offices, and healthcare settings is that of a CRNA.”

For more information on how to choose a CRNA or about the NCANA, please contact [name] at [phone no.] or contact the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists at 1-919-779-7881 or visit [www.ncana.com](http://www.ncana.com).



## Sample Public Service Announcements

**30-second PSA:** Most of us take our good health for granted until we or a loved one face a life-threatening illness, an injury, or even a cosmetic procedure. As we consider surgery, we begin also to examine our options about our healthcare team. The next time you or a loved one face surgery, explore your anesthesia options. Call 919-779-7881 for information about anesthesia and the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists or visit [www.ncana.com](http://www.ncana.com).

**60-second PSA:** We've all heard the adage: There's no time like the present. And for the thousands of North Carolinians facing surgery each year, the present is the most optimum time to review their healthcare options. Consider this: For more than 150 years nurse anesthetists have provided superb anesthesia care before, during, and after surgery. So, the next time you or a loved one face surgery, explore your options for anesthesia care. Nurse anesthetists are well trained, provide cost-effective services, and are dedicated to high professional standards and the overall well-being of their patients. For more information on nurse anesthetists, please call the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists at 919-779-7881 or visit [www.ncana.com](http://www.ncana.com).

**30-second PSA:** If you or a loved one is facing surgery, please consider the following questions: Is anesthesia safe? Who will administer my anesthesia? Who will care for me during the procedure? Stop. Before you or a loved one face surgery, please explore your anesthesia options. Call 919-779-7881 or visit [www.ncana.com](http://www.ncana.com) for information about anesthesia and the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists.

**60-second PSA:** Your surgery may be minor, but there is no such thing as minor anesthesia. Millions of Americans count on Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists for convenient, safe, cost-effective anesthesia care. In fact, CRNAs have been providing safe anesthesia care for more than 150 years. Nurse anesthetists are well trained, provide cost-effective services, and are dedicated to high professional standards and the overall well-being of their patients. For more information on nurse anesthetists, please call the North Carolina Association of Nurse Anesthetists at 919-779-7881 or visit [www.ncana.com](http://www.ncana.com).

Nurse Anesthetists...We Take You There and Back – Safely.