



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Fulfilling the Dream with Foresight Vision A World of Belonging, Innovation, and Solutions

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ASPAN President 2023-2024

Dear perianesthesia nurses,

I hope this message finds you all in good health and high spirits. As we approach a period of gratitude and reflection, I want to take a moment to express my utmost appreciation for your unwavering dedication and incredible work in the field of perianesthesia nursing.

Belonging is the essence of our profession. We come together as a team, supporting each other, and providing the highest level of care to our patients during their most vulnerable moments. The sense of belonging we create within our units is truly remarkable, fostering a culture of trust, respect, and camaraderie. Each one of you plays an integral part in creating this inclusive and empowering environment, for which I am sincerely grateful.

The question of whether one belongs is a fundamental human need that is fulfilled through connections, significance, and purpose. Belonging leads to alignment with our values, confidence, improved performance, a strengthened identity, and increased resilience.¹ For nurses, asking themselves if they belong may be a way of expressing the confusion and conflict they have experienced during the pandemic. Some have praised nurses as the most trustworthy profession, viewing them as angels and heroes, while others have demonized nurses and doubted the reality of the pandemic or rejected basic safety measures. Meanwhile, nurses have faced the relentless challenge of not having enough resources and support to fulfill their training and commitment to providing care.

When trust is undermined, we start to doubt ourselves and others. We may question our purpose and our place in our profession. This could include doubting our career choices and whether we should continue as nurses. We may also question the actions, decisions, and dedication of others, including our leaders and colleagues. Furthermore, we may feel our patients have turned against us, disrespecting and sometimes even becoming violent towards us. The lack of meaningful connection with those we serve erodes our sense of purpose.¹

Creating a healthy work environment requires a sense of belonging. It is crucial for establishing and maintaining trust. Belonging is a multifaceted concept that encompasses being true to oneself, having a connection with patients, feeling a sense of belonging to the nursing profession, and feeling a sense of belonging to one's role or position.²

In the world of perianesthesia nursing, the moments we share with our patients are profound and life changing. From the preoperative assessments to the postanesthesia recovery, your expertise and compassionate care bring comfort and reassurance to those in our care. Your ability to anticipate and respond to the needs of our patients, while balancing the complexities of their medical conditions, is nothing short of extraordinary.

I am humbled by your unwavering commitment to learning and professional development. Perianesthesia nursing demands a level of expertise that requires constant self-improvement and up-to-date knowledge.

Your dedication to advancing your skills and staying abreast of new developments in our field is truly admirable.

During this season of gratitude, let us not forget to express our thanks to one another for the incredible work we do as a team. The challenges we face together only make us stronger, and we must always pause to acknowledge and celebrate the milestones we achieve in our shared journey. Your contributions, both big and small, matter. From the crucial tasks to the uplifting gestures, every action you take enhances the lives of our patients and their families. Thank you to ASPAN past presidents, 2023-2024 ASPAN Board of Directors, National Office staff, Committees, Strategic Work Teams members and leaders, and liaisons.

As we gather with our loved ones this holiday season, let us remember the immense impact we have on the lives of others. Your dedication and kindness create a ripple effect that extends far beyond the walls of our healthcare facilities. Through your care, you provide comfort, hope, and healing in a world that so often feels uncertain. For that, I am eternally grateful.

I am honored to serve as your president and stand alongside each of you as we continue to make a difference in the lives of our patients. Together, we are a force to be reckoned with, and I am proud to belong to this exceptional community of perianesthesia nurses.

With deep appreciation, I wish you all a joyful and restful holiday season filled with love, laughter, and gratitude.

REFERENCE

1. Butler M. Do I belong here? *Am Nurse J.* 2021 May;16(5):28-30.
2. Foley C. The importance of belonging within nursing. *Br J Nurs.* 2021;30(3):148.