



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Igniting Professionalism Through Networking

*November/December 2014*

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**ASPAN President 2014-2015**

Over 150 nurses from across the United States assembled in Nashville, Tennessee for ASPAN's Leadership Development Institute (LDI). LDI is designed to support ASPAN members in their journey to reach excellence for their components, while networking with colleagues from around the country. Networking is defined as: "the exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; specifically: the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business."<sup>1</sup> The ability to dialogue with peers regarding component challenges, concerns and frustrations allows for successful solutions. More importantly, those new collegial relationships develop into lifelong friendships. The opportunity to create these important networks through your ASPAN membership is one of the biggest benefits of ASPAN membership. How reassuring to know that you can pick up a phone or send an e-mail to have quick resolution for a clinical or practice issue or a component challenge. If it is a problem for you, you can be reassured that it was a problem for someone else, and most likely they came up with a solution!

ASPAN has over 15,000 members. Think of the collective knowledge, experience and education contained in that demographic. As a specialty organization, ASPAN is fortunate to have so many experts at its disposal. Recently, I had a challenge at work regarding physician order entry and noncompliance. How easy it was to reach out to my colleagues in the Preoperative Assessment Specialty Practice Group to see if their physicians were compliant. Within hours, my e-mail inbox was full of responses. I was able to take that information, put it into an Excel spreadsheet, and share with my team so that they knew they were not alone in their frustrations.

While in Nashville, I had the opportunity to meet a member from Oregon. She recently changed from oncology to perianesthesia nursing as a manager for preop and PACU. In her desire to learn more about her new specialty, she attended the Leadership Development Institute. My advice to her was to take advantage of all of the experience in the room and network, network, network. Knowing the right person to call when a challenge occurs is usually half the battle toward resolution.

In another weekend LDI activity, several attendees were able to go on a tour of Vanderbilt University. Through networking, they connected with Elizabeth Card, ASPAN's Evidence Based Practice Strategic Work Team Coordinator, and visit Vanderbilt, where Elizabeth works. Not only did they have a wonderful experience, they were able to see how research is being conducted AND brought to the bedside to enhance and improve patient outcomes!

Recently, a sister of one of my peers required a very extensive surgery in another state. Quickly, I was able to send one e-mail and connect with an ASPAN colleague. Let me report that, not only did I receive an immediate response, but the anesthesia provider, preop and PACU nurse were assigned and in place. How special it was for my peer's sister to be told she was a "VIP" and they were expecting her. The family was extremely grateful and quite amazed at our ability to network across the country. This is a beautiful example of the advantage of networking through the ASPAN family!

Networking will always be an integral part of the perianesthesia profession. Foster your networking skills. Stay connected with existing relationships, and take advantage of every opportunity to develop new ones. These new relationships will become one of your most valued assets.

## REFERENCES

1. Networking. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. Available at: <http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/networking>. Accessed September 14, 2014.