



## **AANA, AORN & ASPAN Civility White Paper Summary**

### **Impact and Mitigation of Incivility in Perianesthesia & Perioperative Nursing Teams**

While the hospitals can provide a place of healing and health, they can also harbor widespread workplace incivility that is detrimental to patient safety, nursing care delivery and nurses.

#### **Understanding civility/incivility**

Civility's defining characteristic is its strong connection to society. Being civil is listening with an open mind, respecting others humanness, an awareness of others' needs or situation and using restraint with negative thoughts or behaviors. Kindness is an act of attention to another, and how we treat one another matters! Ample evidence state that workplaces lacking civility cannot retain employees and have reduced productivity and even reduced safety.

#### **Civil work environments create:**

- Safe and high-quality collaborations
- Trust based communities and high functioning teams
- Creativity, innovation and out of the box ideas
- Increased retention-people want to feel valued and respected
- Supportive learning environment

Safe high quality perianesthesia and perioperative healthcare delivery is dependent upon highly functioning and collaborative teams. These teams require the individuals to build and nurture caring, trusting relationships, clear communication is crucial. Incivility impedes communication and collaborations destroying teams and can present in multiple forms ranging from overt acts (verbal abuse or physical aggression) or covert behaviors (bullying, or passive aggressive behaviors). Creating a culture of safety, free from incivility, is everyone's responsibility and all nurses (leaders, staff, and the organization) are accountable for contributing to a civil environment. To promote patient safety and the well-being and health of nurses working within the perianesthesia and perioperative space the three nursing organizations, American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA), Association of PeriOperative Nurses (AORN) and the American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASpan) collaborated to share their unique

*Access the full white paper at <https://www.aspan.org> 4.6.2023*

perspectives and create a joint position statement and a whitepaper addressing incivility based on a comprehensive review and synthesis of the evidence. The resulting position statement was approved by all three organizations governing bodies, a huge win for promoting nurse civility and a safer workplace. *The AANA, AORN and ASPAN Joint Position statement on Civility* is located at: <https://www.aspan.org/Clinical-Practice/Position-Statements>

**This statement provides a solid foundation for improving the health, well-being, and safety of our work environment. How we treat one another matters!**

The collaborative White Paper is a comprehensive synthesis of the evidence, defining incivility and associated behaviors, providing resources and strategies that can be implemented to mitigate incivility and nurture a culture of safety for nurses and patients. The resulting joint Whitepaper concludes:

- Nurses are historically reluctant to report incivility due to fear of repercussions, hence the true prevalence is underrepresented.
- Incivility behaviors may be triggered by inadequate staffing or lack of job autonomy, unhealthy coping skills, a workplace culture of silence, power imbalances or practice of ostracism within the workplace.
- Physical symptoms experienced by nurses exposed to incivility include digestive disorders, pain, fatigue, as well as chronic and acute health symptoms.
- Incivility and lack of colleague's support contributes to job burnout, stress and reduced productivity. This impacts retention of healthcare most precious resource-nurses.
- Incivility in the perianesthesia and perioperative settings can negatively impact patient safety, disrupting nursing practice and contribute to serious adverse events such as wrong site surgery, medication errors, retained surgical objects and reduce efficiency of the team all of which increase healthcare costs.
- Everyone plays a significant role in identifying, mitigating, reducing, and reporting workplace incivility and creating a healthy workplace environment. Civility is everyone's responsibility; we are all accountable for our workplace cultures.

- Implementing strategies such as effective communication, education, behavior modification, role modeling/mirroring civility, professional development, and institutional policies inclusive of a code of conduct and reporting procedures can all promote civility.
- Future research is required to understand incivility's impact on perianesthesia and perioperative nurses and patients' outcomes. This knowledge will drive efforts to mitigate these challenging behaviors and ensure a safer workplace for all.

In 2020, ASPAN then President Elizabeth Card invited and collaborated with AANA and AORN presidents to create this civility fusion vision. The following team members collaborated and successfully completed the tasks set before them:

**ASPAN Representatives as appointed by Elizabeth Card, ASPAN President 2020-2021**

- Kim Godfrey, BSN, RN, CPAN
- Connie Hardy Tabet, MSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA, FASPAN
- Dina A. Krenzischek, PhD, RN, CPAN, FAAN, FASPAN
- Deborah Moengen, BSN, RN, CPAN
- Angelique Weathersby, MSN, MBA, RN

**AORN Representatives as appointed by David Wyatt, AORN president 2020-2021**

- Renae Battié MN, RN CNOR
- Deborah L Spratt MPA BSN RN CNOR NEA-BC CHL
- Ruth Plotkin Shumaker, BSN, RN, CNOR
- Kristy Simmons, MSN RN CNOR
- Maria Sullivan, MSN, RN, CNOR

**AANA Representatives as appointed by Steven Sertich AANA president 2020-2021**

- Edwin Aroke, PhD, MSN, CRNA
- Catherine Horvath, DNP, CRNA Assistant Professor Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
- Brett Morgan, DNP, CRNA, AANA Senior Director of Education and Practice
- Alyssa Rojo, MSN, RN, AANA Research Analyst
- Jessica Switzman, MSN, CRNA

