



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Volunteer: Create Your Opportunity to Influence

January/February 2004

Sandra Barnes, MS, RN, CPAN
ASPAN President 2003-2004

ASPAN Vision: *Shaping the future of perianesthesia nursing through shared knowledge, innovation and passion*

Think about this. In a rural town with no fulltime firefighters, who mans the fire station and responds in a time of crisis? Who sings in the choir or shows you to your seat in church? Who enables Habitat for Humanity to fulfill its vision to build decent and affordable housing for families in need? You are correct, volunteers. Individuals with a passion for a vision and the desire to influence the outcome of a mission are those who take on a challenge and commit to selfless participation in any number of activities. This participation provides the opportunity to become influential. The breadth of influence may vary dependent upon the degree of involvement but, consider this fact, every effort effects the whole.

Each and every one of you has influence at the bedside and is a leader in everything you do on a daily basis. Many of you are the advocate for those patients being prepared for the anesthesia experience. These patients look to you for reassurance and guidance about what they need to know to actively participate in and share responsibility for their care; to affirm that they will come through the experience safely and in good hands. Others of you advocate for those patients recovering from anesthesia. These are the individuals who often cannot speak for themselves and rely on your expertise and caring to see them through the intrusion of anesthesia with constant vigilance. You move them through Phase II and discharge them with the tools needed for care at home. Your expertise and caring remain just a phone call away. You are influencing care at every level.

Along the perianesthesia care continuum, you make a significant difference in many lives and influence the outcomes of care delivery and patient satisfaction. Your influence expands beyond boundaries you cannot define because of the ever-changing atmosphere of healthcare today. You have the responsibility to recognize the significance of your practice and your participation in patient care. You have the responsibility to recognize your individual ability to change, improve, advance, direct, develop, expand, affect, and, yes, even revolutionize perianesthesia care delivery. Who is better positioned to volunteer and share the passion to drive ASPAN into the future?

ASPAN's Mission: *The American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses advances nursing practice through education, research and standards.*

Our Mission is driven by the vision and the work is accomplished through the dedicated efforts of our volunteers who serve on committees, strategic work teams, and as elected leaders. I encourage you to consider active participation in your component and the society, and to begin spreading the word of the importance and significance of organizational involvement. Volunteers are critical to continue ASPAN's journey as the great organization it has grown to be.

The work of the organization cannot be done in isolation. Bringing together all volunteers, committed to what it is that makes each of you unique, will complete the product and advance toward living our vision. Each of you has the ability to meet the challenge and take advantage of this opportunity to grow, network and make a difference for your colleagues. Members, just like you, who are willing to take a risk, are finding they have more to offer than they ever realized. Involvement forces you to expand your circle of

influence and comfort and to discover things about yourself you never dreamed imaginable.¹ I say go for it. Right now make up your mind to say yes rather than how? and let your voice be heard and have your influence be felt.² Volunteers are critical to continue ASPAN's journey toward defining the future of perianesthesia nursing.

Expanding your circles of influence, creating ripples, and effecting change are easily within your grasp. Think about your feeling of pride and personal satisfaction as you become more involved and recognize your own accomplishments. Your efforts will benefit your practice, the work environment for your colleagues and our specialty of perianesthesia nursing. You will have a truly stronger influence by a commitment to ASPAN and your component. Do not miss this chance to revitalize your interest and commitment to component health and ASPAN's future.

Let's get going and make the most of this opportunity. Volunteer!

REFERENCES

1. Barnes, S: Expanding Your Circle of Influence. *J PeriAnesth Nurs* 18(2):75-77, 2003
2. Block, P: *The Answer to How is Yes*. San Francisco, CA, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2002