



# ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

## Message from the President

### Nursing Practice: The Workplace Challenge

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I We have all heard the old saying “practice makes perfect.” In today’s workplace setting, we do not have a perfect hospital, perfect worker, perfect patient or a perfect world. Nurses practice in a variety of settings, ranging from hospitals, ambulatory centers, urban and rural community clinics, schools, long term care and even in the war zone. The nursing profession is more than three million members strong, each facing challenges that affect the profession. In 2010, the Future of Nursing report by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), developed four key messages which are as follows:

1. **Nurses should practice to the full extent of their education and training.** This means removal of scope of practice barriers so that the advance practice nurse would be included in Medicare reimbursements. The practice rules vary from state to state and reform will be necessary.
2. **Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education and training education system that promotes seamless academic progression.** Nurses need competencies such as health policy, leadership, system improvement, research and evidence-based practice, teamwork, diversity and collaboration. Nurses would also be involved in technology and information management. The goal is to have an increase in nurses with a baccalaureate degree to 80% by 2020.
3. **Nurses should be full partners, with physicians and other health professionals, in redesigning healthcare in the United States.** Nurses need to promote leaders within the nursing profession. Nurses also need to be responsible and engaged in healthcare reform.
4. **Effective workforce planning and policy making require better data collection and an improved information infrastructure.** There will be a collaborative and systematic monitoring of available healthcare workers, coordinated by state licensing boards and the Department of Labor to have timely and publically accessible data.<sup>1</sup>

With the support of ASPAN, all perianesthesia nurses can develop their full potential as clinicians, leaders, educators and researchers. Within ASPAN, there are many opportunities available to the grassroots member. Members who meet specific criteria can apply for a scholarship to further education or support their certification. Attending an ASPAN national conference provides networking opportunities with a wide variety of nurses within the practice of perianesthesia services. Any ASPAN member can attend the Leadership Development Institute offered in September every year. The Institute provides members with tools for enhancing their leadership abilities and knowledge of ASPAN’s resources for components and members alike. The ASPAN Board of Directors attends the Institute to respond directly to concerns and questions that attendees may have. ASPAN has committees and strategic work team opportunities that allow active participation as an organizational member, and provides members with current practice resources to bring back to their workplace. As suggested by the IOM report, ASPAN strives to support the development of leaders for the future of the organization. Many of ASPAN’s current leaders and member volunteers have liaison appointments with other large and influential organizations. ASPAN is sitting at the table with groups to participate in forging new ideas, collaborating for best practice ideals, and supporting efforts to provide for the safety and quality of the care that we provide to our patients.

“If you want something, then you must set goals.”

Jon Gordon’s 10 rules for the ride of your life in his book, “The Energy Bus,” reminds me of the years that I rode the bus to school. We had a long route of bumpy, gravel roads, heaters that rarely warmed the feet, and when it was hot, there were the kids insisting the windows be all the way down to allow the dust to fly just to annoy me. Gordon’s rules are:

1. “You’re the driver of the bus.
2. Desire, vision and focus move your bus in the right direction.
3. Fuel your ride with positive energy.
4. Invite people on your bus and share your vision for the road ahead.
5. Don’t waste your energy on those who don’t get on your bus.
6. Post a sign that says “No Energy Vampires Allowed” on your bus.
7. Enthusiasm attracts more passengers and energizes them during the ride.
8. Love your passengers.
9. Drive with purpose.
10. Have fun and enjoy the ride.”<sup>2</sup>

You may ask what this has to do with your practice. To me, this means that each of us is responsible for our own lives and, thus, our nursing practice - we are the drivers. If you want something, then you must set goals. To continue on the ride, you need to fuel yourself with positive energy to keep going. The next rule is to share with others what you have learned on your ride in order to foster your team growth. There may be those who choose to not get on the bus, but this is their choice. Positive people are certainly much easier to accept, but we all have to deal with the negative person. One can hope that enthusiasm will win them over. Your purpose and individual practice shape your careers, so be sure to add fun to ensure that the journey to the destination will be well worth the sometimes bumpy ride.

I still think back to a patient who has had a lasting impact on my practice. Jonathan had Down’s syndrome, and would come to the hospital every six months or so to have an eye and ear exam under anesthesia. For many years he would call me “nurse,” but eventually he learned to call “Tie-la.” If I was scheduled to work, I would request to help get Jonathan ready for surgery or wake him up after surgery. He had a favorite anesthesiologist, and together we would get him ready. Jonathan would choose a stuffed monkey to take home with him each time. He was always such a joy to take care of when he came for surgery. In 2005, he was diagnosed with leukemia, and his illness was too advanced for effective treatment. I would look for greeting cards that had monkeys on them, and encourage my nurse and physician colleagues to sign the cards. Jonathan’s mother reported that he would keep these cards close by to look at during the day. One day, his mother called to inform me that Jonathan was not doing well, and wondered if I could come to visit him. I went to see Jonathan on a Friday - he died the following Thursday. During that final visit, he proudly showed me all of the cards he had received, as well as his collection of movie monsters, each still preserved, in their original boxes. I attended his funeral and saw how many people had also been touched by Jonathan, who all thought Jonathan was so incredibly special. This young man will surely remain in all of our hearts forever. Jonathan faced many challenges in his life, but he always made those who cared for him feel privileged to have been a part of his life. He influenced my practice.

I believe that ASPAN, by way of a strong mission and viable strategic plan, has effectively been dealing with the challenges of today’s workplace. Perianesthesia nurses are making a difference in their own daily practice as well as around the world. The International Conference for Perianesthesia Nurses (ICPAN) held in Dublin, Ireland in September, showcased the practice of nurses across the world. Workplace challenges are opportunities, and in facing these challenges, together we become stronger. Together, we provide a safe environment of care for our patients, families, and cultures across the globe through our commitment to enhance and promote our knowledge, standards, research and education. The steps that each individual nurse takes towards excellence in practice and shares through networking, strengthens nurses’ numbers. As perianesthesia nurses, our shared knowledge and practice uphold our purpose to care for each patient safely, using evidence-based practice plans of care. One nurse at a time, one patient at a time, one day at a time, perianesthesia nurses make a difference throughout the world.

## REFERENCES

1. Institute of Medicine. The Future of Nursing. 2011. Available at <http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-future-of-nursing-leading-change-advancing-health.aspx>. Accessed September 10, 2013.

2. Gordon J. 10 Rules for the Ride of Your Life. 2008. Available at [https://www.google.ie/?gws\\_re=cr&ei=QOs8U9FMhAfk4D4BA#q=the+energy+bus+pdf](https://www.google.ie/?gws_re=cr&ei=QOs8U9FMhAfk4D4BA#q=the+energy+bus+pdf). Accessed September 10, 2013.