



ASPAN

American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Message from the President

Passion and Excellence: Growing, Learning, and Leading Together

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What a wonderful experience we had at the 43rd ASPAN National Conference! It was an exciting and inspiring time seeing perianesthesia nurses from across the country learning new and innovative things that will improve our professional practice and the care we give our patients. All the speakers and presentations were amazing. There was a total of 105 poster presentations and 15 oral presentations. Thank you all for sharing your knowledge and expertise. I always come away from the National Conference excited, energized, and passionate about perianesthesia nursing. I cannot wait to go home and share what I have learned.

Passion and Excellence

Merriam-Webster defines passion as the “intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction.” “A strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept.”¹ Cambridge dictionary defines passion as “an extreme interest in or wish for doing something such as a hobby, activity, etc.” “Something that you are strongly interested in and enjoy.”² When I was thinking about my theme for this coming year serving as your 44th ASPAN president, I thought about the last 27 years I have been an ASPAN member working full-time in the PACU. ASPAN has sparked that passion for my perianesthesia profession.

As perianesthesia nurses, we care for patients in different situations. It could be that patient who found a lump in their breast and is worried about a diagnosis of breast cancer. Or caring for that trauma patient involved in a high-speed motor vehicle accident and is fighting for their life. Perhaps the patient is a young child who just fell off the swing at school and broke her arm and is being prepped for surgery. You see the fear in the child’s eyes as well as their mom’s and dad’s eyes beside her. What about the special needs patient who is coming from radiology after having an MRI under general anesthesia? The patient and their worried family need your understanding and specialized care, preparing and recovering from anesthesia. Perianesthesia nurses are everywhere, such as pre-admit testing, preop, PACU, endoscopy, cardiology, interventional radiology, pain management, professional development, inpatient and ambulatory surgery. We take care of patients of all ages and all phases of care from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Perianesthesia nurses not only care for the patients but also for the families and our professional colleagues. I experienced this firsthand this past year being on the other side as a family member. My mom, husband, and son all had surgeries this past year. It is difficult to wait as a family member wondering/worrying how surgery and recovery is going and waiting for that phone call from the surgeon and PACU nurse. Sometimes it is worse being a nurse and knowing some of the things that could go wrong. I have a new appreciation of the entire surgical experience. Our perianesthesia nurses throughout the process of preadmit testing, preop, Phase I PACU, and Phase II PACU were all amazing! Everyone showed excellence and passion in the care they gave to my family.

ASPAN represents over 60,000 perianesthesia nurses from across the country, but our membership is only about 13,000 perianesthesia nurses. Our organization provides excellent perianesthesia education with the latest information on evidence-based practice recommendations, clinical inquiry, clinical practice, standards, advocacy, and premier publications supporting our practice. ASPAN members across the country are conducting nursing research and quality improvement projects that will expand our practice. Members are advocating for our work environments, global climate changes, and many other nursing issues with our legislative bodies and other organizations. ASPAN's Core Values are Courage, Advocacy, Respect, Excellence, and Service. ASPAN's Core Purpose is to empower and advance the unique specialty of perianesthesia nursing.³ Excellence is what our organization is about, and ASPAN provides the education and resources to its members as part of that excellence.

Growing, Learning, and Leading Together

My vision is to have every perianesthesia nurse across this country know who ASPAN is and want to be part of this impressive organization. Growing our membership at the grassroots level is essential. Each member should be reaching out to their colleagues sharing the benefits and resources ASPAN provides. It is that one-on-one relationship that makes a difference. I got involved with ASPAN by attending my home component's, PeriAnesthesia Nurses Association of California (PANAC), annual fall conference in Sacramento, California in 1997. I was a new PACU nurse and did not know anyone attending the conference but wanted to learn more about my specialty practice. I felt very welcome and accepted the moment I stepped foot in the door. There were many individuals who took me under their wing, introduced me to other members, and eventually got me involved in helping with future seminars, committees, strategic work teams, and mentored me into growing in my practice and leadership skills. Today, I am forever grateful to those members, and share with others my passion for ASPAN.

ASPAN is the premier organization for providing excellent education for perianesthesia nurses. The National Conference is our largest educational event, but there are so many educational webinars, live in-person seminars, on-demand video modules, publications, journal articles, and much more that provide education in our specialty practice. Learning is a lifelong process. For those who attended the National Conference in Orlando, remember: if there were sessions you were not able to attend, you still have time to view the recordings included in your full conference registration fee. If you could not attend the in-person conference, there is an opportunity for you to register online to receive access to the recorded sessions from Tuesday and Wednesday.

Thank you to the many volunteers across the country who serve on ASPAN's committees, Strategic Work Teams, Specialty Practice Groups, and serve as component leaders. It takes a team to build and continue to accomplish all the things this organization provides to perianesthesia nurses across the country. Let us lead together and show perianesthesia nurses from across the country and internationally that ASPAN is the premier organization for perianesthesia nursing excellence.³

REFERENCES

1. Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Definition of passion. Accessed February 29, 2024. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/passion>
2. Cambridge Dictionary. Definition of passion. Accessed February 29, 2024. <http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/passion>
3. About ASPAN. Core Ideology. ASPAN website. Accessed February 29, 2024. <https://www.aspan.org/About/About-ASPAN/Core-Ideology>