

POSITION STATEMENT 16  
*American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses*  
**A Position Statement on Advocacy**



The American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASPAN) has the responsibility to promote advocacy in perianesthesia nursing practice. ASPAN advances perianesthesia nursing advocacy through leadership, education, comprehensive clinical practice and research initiatives, and increased political awareness.

## **Background**

Advocacy is defined as active support that involves the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something - a cause, idea, or policy. Active support is the fundamental action part of advocacy, and some professional nursing directives exist in this regard.

Provision 3 of the American Nurses Association (ANA) *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* addresses the nurse's advocacy role by stating: "The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient."<sup>1</sup> The *Code of Ethics* discusses nurse participation "in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development" and "active involvement in nursing and health care policy."<sup>2</sup> In the duties to the broader community domain, ANA goes on to say: "The profession of nursing, as represented by associations and their members, is responsible for articulating nursing values, for maintaining the integrity of the profession and its practice, and for shaping social policy."<sup>3</sup>

Advocacy terminology is frequently encountered in ASPAN's *Standards of Perianesthesia Nursing Practice*. A description of scope of practice includes perianesthesia nursing roles encompassing patient care, research, administration, management, education, consultation and advocacy.<sup>4</sup> Ethical practice standards include the perianesthesia nurse's role in advocating for patient safety and welfare, and the spiritual comfort of patients, family members and significant others.<sup>5</sup> Under staffing and personnel management, nursing care in perianesthesia settings encompasses "provision of direct patient care, supervision of care given by others, health teaching, and patient advocacy."<sup>6</sup>

## **Position**

It is the position of ASPAN that perianesthesia nurses, individually and collectively, give voice to advocacy for the nursing profession, perianesthesia nursing practice, and patients and their families.

To promote advocacy and awareness:

1. Provide ongoing education and information on current political events involving healthcare policy and the role of the perianesthesia nurse as an advocate;
2. Advance the position and image of perianesthesia nursing through public outreach and education regarding the critical scientific and patient advocacy roles occupied by nurses in the provision of competent, expert healthcare delivery;
3. Promote coalition building within the nursing community;
4. Maintain a solid Clinical Practice Committee to further expertise in perianesthesia nursing practice and a dedicated Research Committee to provide the best available evidence to support nursing practice.

## **Expected Outcomes**

Perianesthesia nurses will be familiar with ASPAN resources, made available in ASPAN publications and on the ASPAN Web site, that provide important information on nursing advocacy.

All perianesthesia nurses will increase their commitment level to activism and advocacy for the profession, perianesthesia nursing practice and patients.

ASPAN, as the voice of perianesthesia nursing practice, will promote fundamental principles of nursing advocacy in all actions involving collaboration or interchange with other professional organizations and regulatory agencies.



## Approval of Statement

This statement was recommended by a vote of the ASPAN Board of Directors on November 2, 2007, in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, and approved by a vote of the ASPAN Representative Assembly on May 4, 2008, in Grapevine, Texas.

## REFERENCES

1. American Nurses Association. Provision 3. *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*. Silver Spring, MD: Nursesbooks.org; 2001:12.
2. American Nurses Association. Provision 7. *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*. Silver Spring, MD: Nursesbooks.org; 2001:22.
3. American Nurses Association. Provision 9. *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*. Silver Spring, MD: Nursesbooks.org; 2001:24.
4. American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses. Scope of Practice: Perianesthesia Nursing. *2006-2008 Standards of Perianesthesia Nursing Practice*. Cherry Hill, NJ: ASPAN; 2006:4.
5. American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses. Perianesthesia Standards for Ethical Practice. *2006-2008 Standards of Perianesthesia Nursing Practice*. Cherry Hill, NJ: ASPAN; 2006:8.
6. American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses. Standard III: Staffing and Personnel Management. *2006-2008 Standards of Perianesthesia Nursing Practice*. Cherry Hill, NJ: ASPAN;2006:14.