

Highlights of the ASPAN 34th National Conference

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By Judith Kinnavy, National Conference Scholarship Recipient

As always, this year's ASPAN National Conference was a great opportunity to network, listen to interesting presentations and connect with fellow perianesthesia nurses from all over the United States-and beyond! This is the third national conference that I have attended. I have previously presented posters at the 2011 Orlando conference and again this year. I also had the pleasure of speaking on the topic of Postoperative Management of Nausea and Vomiting at the 2013 Chicago conference. I feel that, for me, presenting and speaking really serves to increase the value of National Conference attendance.

There were so many interesting lectures this year that it's difficult to narrow down my favorites. Dr. Miles Day's presentation "Perioperative Management of the Chronic Pain Patient" nicely dovetailed with a project at my hospital concerning surgical patients at high risk for pain. A couple of interesting takeaways include a stress response is not present with chronic pain so you won't necessarily see a change in VS and it isn't necessary to treat chronic pain preoperatively (sometimes the patient's norm may be a pain level of "7"). Carol Pehotsky's "Diabetes Mellitus from Pills to Pumps" was a wonderful overview of the newest updates on diabetic perianesthesia management. One of my very favorite presentations, however, was "Writing for Publication" by Jan Odom-Forren, Vallire Hooper and Melanie Chichester. They provided some very practical pointers on writing effectively, different types of articles, and the process of getting published. I found it inspirational –just the encouragement I need to actually pursue publication myself!

I would like to thank ASPAN for the scholarship that supported my attendance this year. I will continue to spread the word on just how worthwhile our National Conference is-I recommend it to all perioperative nurses who would like to expand their knowledge base and professionalism.