

## **2019 National Conference Attendance Award Report**

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I had the distinct privilege of attending the 38<sup>th</sup> National ASPAN Conference in Nashville, TN. As a professional nurse, it is our duty to be relentless in the pursuit of education that expands our practice which translates into better patient outcomes. I had the opportunity to learn about direct patient care topics such as care of the patient in the PeriAnesthesia setting with obstructive sleep apnea, severe mental health diagnoses, orthopedic challenges, and chronic lung disease. Special topics subject matter included recognizing victims of human trafficking, and pediatric special considerations.

Many indirect patient care topics were offered as well ranging from CPAN & CAPA certification, ethical considerations, change management, implementing extended care recovery programs, and regulatory topics. I had the opportunity to hear from prominent medical centers from across the country about their research and innovative practices. As a perioperative nurse manager this was exciting because these topics affect my every day practice.

National conference is not just about education offerings. It affords a chance to come together with PeriAnesthesia nurses from across the country who share your hopes, dreams, vision, and passion for nursing. At the development breakfast, I learned how ASPAN came into being and developed into a platform for patient advocacy. The standards of our practice were developed by dedicated leaders who came before us. Past ASPAN presidents shared about the former PACU acceptable practices.

In this day and age Peri-Op RN's cannot comprehend only having one pulse oximeter to share between all PACU patients. At one time PACU nurses had to choose which patient was sick enough to warrant placing on a cardiac monitor because they were limited in the unit. By forming this national organization PeriAnesthesia nurses let their voices be heard and changed the practice to improve outcomes for all patient under their care. We practice under the very umbrella they provided and continue to develop.

While attending the certification luncheon, I was enthused to be in a room with so many like-minded individuals. This was a chance to have some fun and really celebrate those things that are truly important to me because I know that through certification, nurses advance their practice and improve direct patient care. I was inspired by the examples of service that were evident all around me whether it be to community, organization, profession, or simply to humanity. Recognizing the unique contribution of my specialty that makes the world a better place to live was a priceless experience.