

2021 All-Virtual ASPAN National Conference

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I would like to thank ASPAN for the opportunity to attend the 2021 National Conference virtually. I would also like to thank my assistant nurse manager, Kate Horner, BSN, RN, CPAN, for encouraging me to apply for the National Conference Scholarship. Originally, I applied for the scholarship to attend the 2020 National Conference in Denver, but due to COVID-19, I was unable to attend, as my employer suspended all work-related travel. ASPAN very kindly allowed me to roll over this scholarship to the 2021 National Conference. When the 2021 conference was planned, initially it was going to be both live and virtual. I was happy for the option of a virtual conference, as I was not ready to be in a live conference setting.

I have had the opportunity to attend three previous National Conferences; in the 1990s in Chicago, 2008 in Grapevine, Texas, and 2012 in Orlando Florida. I know that attending a conference in person has many advantages over the virtual experience. It is much easier to keep one's attention in a live setting. It was challenging being in my home office all day watching the monitor. Networking is not nearly as easy virtually as it is in person, and I did not make new friends this year. But I thrived on the advantages of the virtual experience. I did not have to travel, there were no lines, or waiting to get into a restaurant for meals, no lines for the restroom, my sleep was better as I was in my own bed, the temperature of my environment was always ideal, and my expenses were reduced.

I was able to earn 21.25 contact hours during the live portion of the conference during April 26 – 29. From the beginning of May until the end of July, I was able to take advantage of many educational offerings via the On-Demand modules through the ASPAN Learn site. I appreciated the On-Demand modules as I could back up the video to hear a point again or pause the video to attend to the laundry or to take a phone call. I was able to earn an additional 47.5 contact hours. Many of the modules were excellent, full of information that is very pertinent to my practice as a Phase I adult PACU nurse.

Many of the presentations particularly resonated with me. Jimmy Page, the keynote speaker, spoke about the power of a positive attitude. It hit home with me. He said that "if you change the way you look at things (things that I "have to do" versus things that I "get to do"), the things you look at change." It is a message that does not get old and often needs repeating. I appreciated the presentation of ASPAN Standards by Jacque Crosson as well as her presentation on Safe Staffing in the PACU. Both were very timely presentations.

I also thought that the presentation on How to Write CPAN and CAPA Examination Questions was interesting. There is much more thought and work that goes into creating an exam question than I previously imagined. I enjoyed the reminder to attend to my self-care in the Value Your Well-Being presentation by Connie Hardy Tabet. Two other presentations that I thought were excellent were Bleeding Toolbox: How, When and Why of Bleeding Diathesis by Angela Collins-Yoder, an excellent grasp of the topic, and Perioperative Management of Cardiomyopathy by Brenda Jahnke. Both, I wish that I could have recorded for future reference.

Thank you, gratefully, for the opportunity to attend the 2021 ASPAN National Conference virtually. It was fabulous and a privilege to attend.