

# The Awakener

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## Your Voice, Your Vision

*Patient and Peer Advocacy*

Leslie Edney, BSN, RN, CAPA  
President, GAPAN 2007-2008



*Editor's Note: Leslie Edney presented the following speech during the annual state meeting of the GAPAN General Membership, Savannah, Georgia in September 2007.*

Advocacy encompasses the involvement of one person- or a group of people- actively speaking out. This participation may include the defense or support of a cause, deliberate action, or seeking to bring about change. Advocacy is not a new concept in nursing. Nurses have been advocating for patients and the practice of nursing since the days of Florence Nightingale. As perianesthesia nurses, we are well informed and well educated in our practice, thus allowing us to engage in patient advocacy every day. Being

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## Promoting National Patient Safety Goals and The Surgical Care Improvement Project in the Inpatient Holding Area

Heather T. Click, BA, RN, CPAN

As a Level –I PACU nurse, I am accustomed to providing care to patients in the post-operative period. But more recently as the RN assigned to our hospital's Inpatient Holding Area I have gained a new perspective and an opportunity to promote patient safety initiatives for patients moving through the peri-anesthesia process. Patients in the inpatient holding area are monitored and assessed by the holding area RN during the time immediately preceding surgery. Having a nurse specifically assigned to care for these patients benefits patient safety in multiple ways and specifically promotes several of the 2006-2007 National Patient Safety Goals as well as the Surgical Care Improvement Project.

### IMPROVE THE ACCURACY OF PATIENT IDENTIFICATION:

Upon arrival in the holding area the patient's identification is confirmed using at least two identifiers, specifically by asking the patient or significant other accompanying the patient to state his or her name and birth date and matching the response with the patient's wrist band (Universal Protocol). In addition, as part of the surgical site verification process the chart is reviewed for the presence and accuracy of permits and other required documentation. All of the preceding is again verified by the circulating nurse from the O.R. before the patient is transported to the operating room. This procedure provides overlapping layers of security in order to prevent the possibility of "wrong-site surgery".

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an advocate requires not only the knowledge and understanding of a topic or issue; advocacy includes giving voice to and speaking out about that issue. The same skills that comprise perianesthesia nursing expertise also serve us in the role of advocate. One of ASPAN's goals is to be recognized worldwide as the "voice" for perianesthesia nursing. Our advocacy goals center not only on patients entrusted to our care, but on the nursing profession and the general provision of healthcare. Over the next year, please join me, be the voice, and advocate for our patients, practice, and profession.

Most of us have encountered concerns about patient safety, staffing, environmental and workplace issues, the recruitment and retention of new nurses, and the aging nursing workforce. Nurses' experience and knowledge make a profound difference in our role as trusted patient care experts. If we as nurses neglect to organize and speak out on important issues surrounding professional practice, then others who are less knowledgeable will direct our practice. As professional experts we have a responsibility to address issues that affect our patients' well-being, our specialty practice, and the healthcare system in general-- To truly "Be the Voice" for perianesthesia nursing.

You may be asking, "How can I be the voice for perianesthesia nursing? Can one person actually make a difference?" Absolutely! Who can articulate nursing practice and provide relevant, accurate perspectives on nursing better than a nurse? Every nurse can identify barriers to best practices and can then offer suggestions and solutions for improvements. It is time to raise your voice regarding practice challenges and concerns. Each of you is a remarkable patient activist who makes a profound difference in the lives of others. Our voices cannot stop at the bedside. We must advocate for and be actively involved in issues that affect our workplace environment, such as the safety and staffing issues that negatively affect the care we deliver. The practice environment should be one that is respectful of the nursing profession; therefore, we have to speak out to ensure that nursing practice has support and value.

In the words of our ASPAN President Susan Fossum: "Nurses must transform thoughts and ideas from silence into voice and action to truly influence the future. Embrace your expertise and depth of knowledge. Demonstrate it. Give voice to it. You are in a position to impact vital healthcare transformation. Our voices and actions, individually and collectively, will move ASPAN forward in unity and advocacy."

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity you have given me to lead GAPAN, and I am honored to serve as your president.

## West Georgia District Shares to Make a World of Difference.

Cindy Tucker, BSN, RN

In the spirit of volunteerism and a desire to share our nursing background with others, seven members of the West Georgia district spent a portion of one Saturday at MedShare International.

MedShare International was established in 1988 by a group of concerned Atlanta citizens, who were motivated by two critical situations, the medical needs of economically developing countries and the threat to the environment from discarded surplus medical supplies, much of which was destined for landfills.

The West Georgia district GAPAN members met in January at MedShare's 48,500 square foot distribution center in Decatur, GA. Numerous medical and surgical items from sutures to suction canisters, betadine to blood sets, were sorted, packed, boxed and labeled for shipping to Haiti, Zambia, Ethiopia and Ecuador, to name just a few.

In addition to container shipments, MedShare supports volunteer medical teams by providing basic supplies necessary to deliver quality, safe care to medically disenfranchised populations. Local medical teams may visit MedShare's on site medical team "store", and for a small donation, obtain supplies needed for their mission trips.

As of January 2006, MedShare has shipped 277,538 sutures, 3000 pairs of crutches, over 3.5 million gauze sponges and 20,000 pairs of eyeglasses—to name just a few.

Over \$35 million worth of surplus medical supplies and equipment has been shipped to 89 countries, while saving 652,800 cubic feet of landfill space.

Several of the West Georgia district members commented that they have plans to return and volunteer with MedShare again. More information is available at their website at [www.MedShare.org](http://www.MedShare.org).



### Contributors needed!

We are always looking for contributors for the newsletter. This is a great way to share your knowledge and expertise with other PeriAnesthesia nursing colleagues. Thanks to Heather Click and Cindy Tucker of the West District for their contribution to our practice. So if you like to write, have a topic that you are interested in, why not write an article for the newsletter.

## DID YOU KNOW?

### GAPAN's Mission Statement?

Established in 1977, the Georgia Association of PeriAnesthesia Nurses contributes to the advancement of our nursing specialty practice. Rooted in education, the mission of GAPAN is to establish an organization for networking and advancement of PeriAnesthesia Nursing with an emphasis on continuing education, community service, and research.

### Your GAPAN District Presidents

#### **Augusta**

Karen Catchings, RN

#### **Atlanta**

Dana Lingerfelt RN

#### **Columbus**

Lisa Williams, RN

#### **West**

Libby Bermingham

#### **Savannah**

Tammy Waller RN

#### **South Metro**

Gretchen Konas, RN

#### **Southwest**

Lynda Bailey RN

## IMPROVE THE SAFETY OF USING MEDICATIONS:

Inpatients arriving in the holding area often have intravenous fluids or medications infusing via peripheral or central lines. Particularly if there are multiple IV lines and concurrent infusions, the holding area nurse can “track tubings to their source”, monitor and label them as needed and communicate the patient’s pre-op status to the surgery and anesthesia staff. Allergies are confirmed and Medication Administration Records are reviewed. This oversight enhances continuity of care and medication safety from the patient care unit to the surgery suite and into PACU.

## REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF POST-OPERATIVE INFECTIONS:

SCIP guidelines recommend that appropriate pre-op antibiotic therapy be infused within one hour prior to surgical incision time. The holding area nurse is able to determine if pre-op antibiotic therapy has been ordered and/or administered. Frequently the appropriate infusion interval coincides with the patient’s stay in the holding area and the holding area nurse is able to ensure compliance with the SCIP guideline.

The Inpatient Holding Area plays an important role in ensuring patient safety during the perianesthesia process and provides the nurse with many opportunities to be an advocate for the surgery patient. You can find information about the 2006-2007 National Patient Safety Goals at [www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/NationalPatientSafetyGoals/07](http://www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/NationalPatientSafetyGoals/07) ; SCIP Project information is available at [www.MedQIC.org/dcs](http://www.MedQIC.org/dcs).

## SAVE THE DATE

2008 GAPAN State Conference  
Calloway Gardens  
Pine Mountain, Georgia  
September 19-21<sup>st</sup>, 2008.

# ASPAN SPG might be right for YOU

## **SPG? What is it?**

A SPG (pronounce it “spig”) is a Specialty Practice Group that brings together nurses with an interest in a perianesthesia sub-specialty or focus of practice.

In ASPAN, these groups are “member-driven.” This means that a group forms when a number of members identify a clinical or professional issue and decide to collaborate and share resources related to their shared interest.

When a minimum of fifty members commit to join the group, they seek approval from the ASPAN Board of Directors and, when approved, will have support services from the National Office to develop and promote the SPG.

## **What are the benefits of joining?**

Members receive a roster of all other group members and two SPG newsletters per year.

ASPAN provides a password-protected site for each SPG to post information and some groups have developed online discussion sites restricted to their members.

National Conference participants have the opportunity to attend SPG meetings and participate in group discussions and meet their counterparts.

## **Current ASPAN Specialty Practice Groups**

Advanced Degree  
Geriatric  
Management  
Pain Management  
Pediatric  
Preoperative Assessment  
Publications

More information at  
[www.aspan.org](http://www.aspan.org)

## **Who may join?**

Current ASPAN members may join any of the SPGs. The cost is \$15 / year for each SPG – *in addition to* ASPAN’s regular dues.

## **How do I find out more?**

The purpose of each Specialty Practice Group is posted at the ASPAN website, [www.aspan.org](http://www.aspan.org). Look for the tab, “About Us,” then click on “Organization” and find the link to *Specialty Practice Groups*.

Each group coordinator is listed and can be contacted for more information.

## Two new SPGS being developed

### **Perianesthesia Nurse Educator**

*Do you...work with nurses new to perianesthesia nursing practice, teach or assess perianesthesia competencies, or provide ongoing education in your unit or work place?*

*Yes? Then you are invited to join a Perianesthesia Nurse Educator Specialty Practice Group.*

The purpose of the group will be to promote collaboration among perianesthesia nurse educators and share resources related to perianesthesia orientation to practice, competencies and continuing education.

*Staff members, educators, managers – all are welcome. For more information, contact*

Sara Waldron BSN RN CPAN  
[snwaldron@cox.net](mailto:snwaldron@cox.net)

### **Integrative Medicine**

Patients in increasing numbers are experimenting with and using various complementary therapies.

Perhaps it's time to embrace Eastern medicine modalities and find ways to incorporate these into daily perianesthesia practice.

There is interest among ASPAN members to organize an Integrative Medicine Specialty Practice Group.

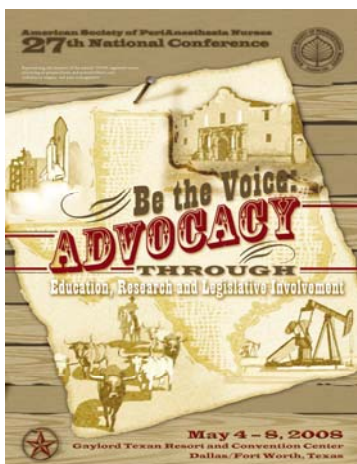
*Please contact us if you are interested.*

Barbara Ochampaugh BSN RN CPAN  
[barbochampaugh@verizon.net](mailto:barbochampaugh@verizon.net)

Blanca Marichal BS RN CPAN CAPA  
[blmaricha@notes.cc.sunysb.edu](mailto:blmaricha@notes.cc.sunysb.edu)

Any topic of interest to you will be of interest to others, we all enjoy hearing new ideas, information and viewpoints, so share your research and knowledge on the topic with your GAPAN peers. These articles should be between 250 and 500 words. (It's ok if they are longer.) The articles are edited before being published. There is nothing to fear from never having published, we are here to help and support you in your efforts. If interested in writing an article, want to discuss ideas or submit your piece, please call, or e-mail me (see contact information at end of this newsletter). Sarah

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## Live Large and Think Big in Texas

*ASPAN 27<sup>th</sup> National Conference Preview: May 4-8, 2008*

*By: Susan McDonald, RN, CPAN, CAPA - 2008 National Conference Strategic Work Team Coordinator*

Perhaps by now, you have browsed through the 2008 ASPAN National Conference brochure trying to decide which educational sessions to attend.

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Conference offers many interesting topics and excellent speakers, so choosing may not be easy! With the many options available, **you could earn 40-50 contact hours** during Conference week. In addition to the regular education sessions, contact hours are awarded for participating in the Research Poster Grand Rounds on Tuesday and Celebrate Successful Practices on Wednesday.

Several of your peers participated in a Speaker Development Workshop at the 2007 National Conference. After formulating, researching and developing an educational presentation, these colleagues have honed their presentation skills and will offer the topics during Conference. Please support them by attending these

presentations and earn some additional contact hours. Seating during the sessions is limited, so come early.

### *Welcome First Time Attendees*

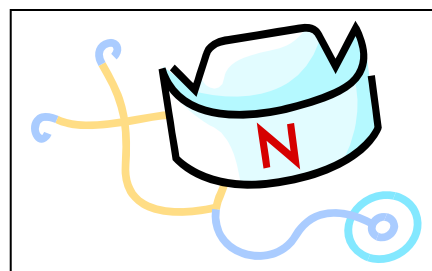
The sheer size of National Conference can be a little overwhelming for newcomers. If this will be your first ASPAN Conference, plan to attend one of the two First Timers' Orientation sessions. The orientation sessions will help you navigate the syllabus and pocket guide, explain the evaluation forms, preview the social activities and provide an opportunity to meet the ASPAN Regional Directors, who can answer your questions about Conference and ASPAN. If you are interested in sharing a hotel room, information is provided in the brochure to help you find a roommate.

**Monday, May 5 is CPAN/CAPA Day.** All certified nurses are invited to register to attend the CPAN/CAPA Celebration Breakfast held bright and early on Monday morning. Besides offering the certification examinations on Sunday, May 4, ABPANC will present several sessions throughout Conference to help you certify, re-certify, promote certification, and participate in item writing for potential future exam questions.

### *Plan for Some Fun*

Your conference brochure includes an Optional Tour booklet. See the many sights of the Dallas/Fort Worth area and let someone else do the driving! Register for a tour showcasing area museums and attractions, shopping venues and historic sites. The roadside highways will be resplendent with spring wildflowers such as Bluebonnets, Indian Blankets and Brown-Eyed Susans, making the drive to the world renowned wild life conservancy, Fossil Rim, a special treat.

ASPAN's National Conference Strategic Work Team has worked hard to bring you an outstanding 2008 National Conference. Our plans for the education sessions, special social events and optional tours are as big as Texas, and we are eager to welcome you to our home state. So come on down, y'all, and stay a spell!





The GAPAN Board Wishes You All A Wonderful PANAW Week.  
Email us at [GAPAN3@yahoo.com](mailto:GAPAN3@yahoo.com) to let us know your celebration plans and turnouts!

**Where are the district reports? The contact info? The calendar of events???**

With the expansion of the GAPAN website, some regular features of the Awakener have been moved from print to cyberspace. To ensure timely reporting to our members, as well as a convenient source of information the following features have been moved to the web:

- GAPAN Board of Directors and contact information
- GAPAN District Presidents and contact information
- GAPAN District Reports
- A Calendar of Events
- Conference Corner
- PeriAnesthesia Nurse of the Year application
- Gold Leaf Award information
- And Much More

Come visit  
[www.ga-pan.org](http://www.ga-pan.org)  
for up-to-date happenings  
with GAPAN

The address of the GAPAN Yahoo!  
Group's homepage is:

[http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/GAPAN\\_General\\_Membership/](http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/GAPAN_General_Membership/)

