



About the American Psychiatric Nurses Association

The American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA), founded in 1986, is a 501c(3) not for profit organized exclusively for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes. Since its founding, APNA has grown to be one of the largest professional membership organizations committed to the practice of psychiatric-mental health (PMH) nursing and wellness promotion, prevention of mental health problems, and the care and treatment of persons with mental health and substance use disorders.

MEMBERSHIP

APNA is a national individual membership organization whose membership is inclusive of all PMH nurses (RN) including associate degree (ADN), baccalaureate (BSN), and advanced practice (APRN). Membership currently totals more than 12,800 nurses and is comprised of approximately 50% Registered Nurses and 50% Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (includes both Clinical Nurse Specialists and Nurse Practitioners). Members practice in a variety of settings, including inpatient, community, academic and research settings; in public, private and public health institutions; and in high level administrative positions at state and federal levels.

APNA connects psychiatric-mental health nurses to a dynamic network of colleagues. Members communicate online, through conference calls, and at face-to-face meetings. This system allows for programs targeted to regional needs, as well as quick and wide distribution of education, standards, position papers, and materials to APNA members and constituents. APNA's online community gives members the opportunity to participate in timely online discussions, share resources, and collaborate on the development of educational content. Perhaps most importantly, APNA members share expertise through the variety of avenues for participation in APNA.

GOVERNANCE

As stated in its bylaws, "APNA provides leadership to promote psychiatric-mental health nurses, improve mental health care for culturally diverse individuals, families, groups, and communities, and shape health policy for the delivery of mental health services..." APNA carries out its mission through a member-elected Board of Directors. The nine-member Board (plus the Executive Director serving as an ex-officio nonvoting member) governs the association in accordance with APNA Bylaws and policies and procedures.

The Board advances the APNA mission through volunteer committees, councils, and task forces that address issues of importance to mental health and substance use care in the areas of nursing practice, education, research, administration and policy. The Board also governs regionally via a network of 34 state chapters. The chapter, committee, and task force structures allow for input from content experts and provide a grassroots approach to the dissemination of information to constituents.

Through a culture of inclusivity and collaboration, the Board sets strategic initiatives that address the complexity and diversity inherent in the psychiatric-mental health nursing profession. The Executive Director then oversees the staff, who are guided by a members-first philosophy, in operationalizing the initiatives and supporting volunteer content experts.

PROGRAMS, PRODUCTS, & SERVICES

APNA programs, products, and services are driven by member needs assessments and Board strategic planning. They align with APNA policies and procedures and their relevance is evaluated on an ongoing basis by the Board based on data and information provided by staff.

As an accredited provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation, APNA offers in-person and online continuing nursing education programs that bring the latest developments and research to the professional community and help members meet requirements for certification. Whether it's the first competency-based training on the assessment and management of suicide risk for PMH nurses or a series of webinars that empower nurses across specialties to address the opioid crisis, APNA education is instrumental in ensuring that nurses are prepared to provide high quality and up-to-date care that meets public health needs.

APNA hosts three national conferences annually and chapters host regional conferences throughout the year. The APNA Annual Conference is the largest gathering of PMH nurses in the US each year, with approximately 1,600 attendees and a program generated by an open call for abstracts and peer review process. The APNA Annual Clinical Psychopharmacology Institute (500+ attendees) and APNA Clinical Psychopharmacology Institute *West* (200+ attendees) provide cutting edge research and education related to psychiatric and substance use medications to nurses, most of whom have prescriptive authority.

In-person conferences at the national and regional level are augmented by APNA's online education. The APNA eLearning Center provides all PMH nurses with online access to nationally recognized speakers, with session recordings from APNA conferences and education specifically developed for dissemination online.

Through the APNA Research Grants program, nurses obtain support for research that will advance the collective knowledge of the profession. In a similar fashion, the APNA Board of Directors Student Scholarship recognizes the accomplishments of nursing students, exposes them to the psychiatric-mental health nursing profession, and strengthens their professional networks.

In addition to its website and online community, APNA communicates with the more than 30,000 PMH nurses in its database through print, electronic, and social media, a peer-reviewed journal, and a monthly email newsletter. These communications report on issues of importance to PMH nursing, including legislation, regulation and policy; scientific research and emerging trends in health care; educational opportunities; and breaking news.

The *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (JAPNA)*, owned by APNA and published by SAGE Publishing, provides quality, up-to-date information to promote PMH nursing, improve mental health care for culturally diverse individuals, families, groups, and communities, as well as shape health care policy for the delivery of mental health services. *JAPNA* has a circulation of 19,000+ subscribers and is indexed by Thomson Reuters with one of the highest impact factors of psychiatric-mental health nursing journals.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

APNA's many collaborative relationships with community, professional, and governmental stakeholders help guide advances in nursing and mental health care. They also ensure that psychiatric-mental health nursing has a voice in decisions and initiatives that will affect its members and the persons to whom they provide care.

APNA monitors the external environment to cultivate existing relationships as well as discover emerging stakeholders and develop strategic partnerships with them. APNA also regularly sends its volunteer content experts to represent the organization at policy-making tables and events across the health care landscape.

OPERATIONS

APNA has an operating budget of approximately 4.4 million. The Executive Director, with the assistance of two Associate Executive Directors, leads 22 staff members (12 of whom are full time) in supporting the day to day functions of the organization. A hybrid office of in-person and remote employees, most of the full-time staff operate out of the headquarter office in Falls Church, Virginia and work remotely intermittently.

The organization has recently begun the process of significantly upgrading its technological infrastructure, including installing a new phone system, transitioning to a new client management system, and designing a new website. This technology upgrade will streamline staff processes and enhance the member experience.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Embracing a diverse membership is a key component of the organization's identity. APNA is committed to continuing efforts to welcoming and giving voice to the diversity within the psychiatric-mental health nursing profession. As its membership continues to grow, APNA's focus must remain on psychiatric-mental health nurses of every flavor and in every setting. In order to thrive and meet this diverse membership's needs effectively, the organization must remain agile, innovative, and continue to leverage new technologies.

Continued and expanded relationships with stakeholders will ensure that APNA is able to influence policy decisions in a way that ensures the success of the profession and addresses current and future challenges within the health care arena. One such challenge is the psychiatric-mental health workforce shortage, a pressing need that will require creativity, initiative, and strong strategic partnerships to tackle. APNA's initial efforts to address this are already underway in the form of a task force studying the current psychiatric-mental health nursing workforce and a campaign to raise the public profile of psychiatric-mental health nurses.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH

The current APNA Executive Director is retiring after 13 years with the organization. Under his leadership, the organization has grown and matured, with 225% growth in membership, financial stability, and the introduction of new programs. The APNA Board of Directors is now looking for a candidate to succeed the current Executive Director and work with current staff to continue and maintain this track record of success.