



# CONNAPA NEWS

A Publication of The Connecticut Academy of  
Physician Assistants

2008 Summer Edition

August 1, 2008

## President's Message

By Tricia Marriott, PA-C, MHS



What motivates someone to become not only a ConnAPA member, but a ConnAPA member who is *involved*? Obligation? A sense of being a part of something? Dedication to the PA profession? Access to CME? Legislative representation? Social activities? The newsletter? Peer pressure?

We all have our reasons. For me, membership started as an obligation. It was just something we, as professionals, were expected to do. As the years went by, I was motivated by changes in PA legislation and a need for current information on how those changes in the law affected me. I started

practicing before PAs were licensed in the state of Connecticut. ConnAPA kept me informed, and gave me direction when the time came to apply for a license.

Then, in the late '90s I found myself complaining about the prescriptive practice laws. Of course, we didn't have prescriptive authority when I first started practice; ConnAPA was directly responsible for making prescriptive rights happen, even if the law was (and remains) cumbersome and difficult for PAs, supervising physicians, and ultimately, our patients. I had no business complaining—I did nothing to help get the laws passed.

There is a quote, describing Eleanor Roosevelt, which has been a driving force for me; "...she'd rather light a candle than curse the darkness". In other words, be a part of the solution, rather than complain about the problem. So, I gave myself a kick in the butt, stopped complaining, and showed up at a ConnAPA Legislative Committee meeting.

I've been *involved* ever since.

-So, do you want a CME dinner held in your region? Do you have a rep willing to help sponsor a talk? Contact your Regional Director to help set up a ConnAPA sponsored CME.

-Are there issues at your hospital that you need help with? Come to a Hospital Based PA sub-committee meeting.

-Want updates on PA law? Go to the website, [www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org) for the latest.

-Have some ideas for the Charter Oak Conference? Contact the committee chair, or better yet, join the team.

-Are you a writer? Submit an article for the quarterly newsletter.

-Think we need to do more to promote PAs to the public? Volunteer at our booth at the NBC30 Health and Wellness Fair in October.

Light a candle.

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## PA Focus— Brian Maurer, PA-C



Meet Brian Maurer--physician assistant, author and columnist. Brian has practiced medicine as a physician assistant in pediatrics for almost 30 years here in Connecticut. He writes a monthly column, "Notes from A Healer," for the *Yale Journal for Humanities in Medicine*, and blogs online at [www.lulu.com/BrianTMaurer](http://www.lulu.com/BrianTMaurer). He was one of the founding editors of Cell2Soul.org and Cell2Soul.typepad.com. He serves on the editorial board of JAAPA and has been published in JAAPA, JAMA, and the *British Medical Journal*.

Brian began his career as a pre-med major. After about two years, his college plans were interrupted by the Vietnam

War. Brian became a Coast Guard corpsman. While he was in the service, he met a physician assistant who encouraged him to become a PA. His name was Bob Girard. Bob told him about his practice as a PA in a rural health clinic in Maine, where his supervising physician was over 25 miles away in a nearby town. Brian credits Bob's tales of being a PA as a major influence on his decision to apply to PA school. Now, years later, Brian shares his tales of the life of a PA in his book, *Patients Are A Virtue*, available at <http://www.lulu.com/content/362517>. The book is a collection of vignettes of patient case histories and the often surprising ways in which these experiences have shaped Brian's life, both as a

practitioner and as a human being.

Do you have an interesting story of your own to share? The ConnAPA Newsletter welcomes your stories, or any ideas you might have for an interesting piece about the experience of being a physician assistant. Please email Lori Pazameta, Newsletter Editor, at [loril1967@gmail.com](mailto:loril1967@gmail.com).

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#### **DEADLINES FOR FALL 2008 ISSUE**

October 15, 2008

Please email editorial submissions to:

**Lori Pazameta**  
**[loril1967@gmail.com](mailto:loril1967@gmail.com)**



## ConnAPA Scores Legislative Victories

By Linda Kowalski and Tricia Marriott

The 2008 Legislative Session came to a chaotic conclusion May 7th at midnight. ***Numerous bills died on the Senate and House Calendars.*** Little was accomplished over the final week, and this had prompted the Democratic Leadership to hold a Special Session in mid-June. The call of the session was originally planned to be limited, primarily to renew or extend the real estate conveyance tax for another two years. They reconvened in a marathon Special Session on June 11<sup>th</sup> to extend this tax and primarily halt an increase in rising energy and gas prices. A final veto session was held on June 23<sup>rd</sup> when legislators overrode the Governor's veto of legislation to increase the minimum wage.

The major action of the State Legislature for months had been to develop revisions to the second year of the current biennial budget which began on July 1, 2008. This effort was derailed when the April quarterly tax receipts showed large drops from the original projections. Rather than try and cut spending or raise taxes for next year's budget, the Democratic Leadership and Governor decided to keep the current spending plan in place and address whatever deficit problem emerged later. The state has over \$1 billion in the "rainy day" fund to cover such shortages.

Events over the past few months have been driven by the fact that the state's economic situation has deteriorated rapidly. A \$250 million budget surplus for the fiscal year that ended June 30 suddenly turned into a deficit of at least \$50 million. The budget which took effect on July 1 is \$52.9 million in deficit as of May 22nd projections by OPM. The Governor took action through Executive Order on June 24th imposing 3 to 5 percent cuts or rescissions to state agency budgets. She is barred from reducing municipal aid and entitlements. She has imposed an out-of-state travel ban, a hiring freeze

and other agency tightening measures. The projected revenue shortfall for FY '09 is \$150 million in a press release issued May 22<sup>nd</sup> from the Governor's Budget Office. A June 2 press release by Comptroller Wyman's office estimates that the deficit has grown to \$67.8 Million.

### ***Legislation to Order Durable Medical Equipment and Certify Disability For Handicapped Windshield Placard Passes***

With minutes to go in the Legislative Session, *HB 5701, "An Act Concerning Revisions To Statutes Pertaining To The Department of Public Health"* passed the Legislature. It is now Public Act 08-184. Tricia Marriott, PA-C, President and Legislative Chair of ConnAPA, testified in support of our legislative initiatives back in March of the session. We are pleased to report that they moved forward successfully, while many other initiatives died on the calendars, and passed in Sections 13 and 14, respectively, of the final bill. Section 13 expands the scope of practice of a physician assistant to include prescribing and approving the use of durable medical equipment. Section 14 expands the list of professionals, to include physician assistants, and allow them to certify a patient's disability to enable patients to obtain windshield placards or handicapped stickers issued by the DMV. Both provisions are effective October 1, 2008.

### ***Admissibility of Reports Signed by PAs Passed and Signed Into Law***

This legislation was introduced in the Judiciary Committee as *SB 507*, passed the Legislature, and is now Public Act 08-48. It was signed by Governor Rell and is effective October 1, 2008. It extends the same rules in civil cases concerning the admissibility of records of physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses as applicable to physicians,

dentists and other health care providers. It specifically allows reports, acts and records signed by PAs and APRNs to be introduced as business entry evidence in civil proceedings thereby eliminating the need for the provider to physically testify.

### ***Automatic External Defibrillators – No Action***

Although there were three bills introduced, each in a different committee, the General Assembly failed to pass any legislation requiring the purchase of or use of automatic external defibrillators in health clubs, and municipal buildings and schools. *SB 687, "An Act Concerning Automatic External Defibrillators"*, raised in the Judiciary Committee, was never called for action in the State House. The bill would have established requirements for the use of AEDs in health clubs and athletic facilities of higher education.

*HB 5503*, a proposal from the General Law Committee, would have required health clubs to have at least one automated external defibrillator (AED) on the premises and at least one employee trained in the use of an AED present at the facility during staffed business hours. Following a referral from the House, the bill died in the Judiciary Committee. *HB 5812*, the Public Health Committee bill on the topic, died in the Appropriations Committee. This bill sought to increase access to AEDs in municipal buildings and schools by providing grants to municipalities to purchase AEDs.

### ***Workforce Issues - Hospital Staffing***

One bill of interest that fell victim to the Legislative filibustering and inactivity that occurred in the final weeks of the session was *SB 470*. Since the bill had a fiscal note, it did not move forward.

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## Annual Business Meeting Marks One-Year Anniversary With S&S Mgt.

By Michael Thompson, Associate Executive Director

The Annual Business Meeting and Awards Presentation was held on June 27<sup>th</sup> at Brix Restaurant in Cheshire, CT. The evening began with a presentation by William H. Frishman, MD, practicing internist and cardiologist with a research interest in cardiovascular pharmacology, clinical epidemiology and geriatrics, not to mention a life-long Yankees fan. His CME presentation, "Managing UA/NSTEMI: From Acute Care to Long-term Prevention of Secondary Events", was insightful, thought-provoking, and entertaining. He gladly answered questions following his presentation and was a very warm and gracious guest whom we hope to hear from again in the future.

Following the lecture and dinner was the installment of the 2008-2009 Officers & Directors. All officers remained for consecutive terms and for the first time in several years, all Regional Director positions were represented. There was even a contested election for Region IV in which a winner was determined by a majority vote of Region IV members.

Each of the Board members and several Committee Chairs gave an update on the past year's developments and current activities. These committees are very active and dedicated to achieving their goals and objectives and there is much to be excited about as we head into the new membership year. Through the persistent leadership of Tricia Marriott, we continue to actively represent PAs legislatively (*see legislative update*),

have organized a task force of hospital-based PAs, and have been granted associate membership status in the Connecticut State Medical Society. Our Conference Planning & Education Committee is already beginning plans for next year's Charter Oak Conference, as well as looking into new CME dinner topics to be held regionally. Our Public Relations Committee, led by Justin Champagne, has recently brought on a new newsletter editor, Lori Pazameta. He is also organizing ConnAPA's participation at several statewide events including the CSMS Annual Meeting on September 24<sup>th</sup>, the NBC 30 Health & Wellness Festival October 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, and the CT Academy of Family Physicians Scientific Symposium on October 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Finally, Bill Kohlhepp and his Membership Committee have also been meeting on a regular basis to organize and implement new strategic membership drive campaigns aimed at increasing the percentage of licensed PAs who belong to ConnAPA. I would like to remind everyone to give strong consideration to volunteering some of your time to one of these committees who's work shapes the direction of the Academy and ultimately benefits all PAs in the state.

At the conclusion of the evenings events was the awards presentation. These awards are presented annually to individuals who have shown their dedication, commitment, and leadership by volunteering their time and hard work to significantly contribute to the success of the Academy. This year's

deserving recipients, included: Jeanine Ondrof - Service Award, Jonathan Pinto - Leadership Award, Mark Tabaka - Initiative Award, and S&S Management - Presidents Award. Each of these members, as well as the entire ConnAPA leadership, continue to put forth a great deal of effort and commitment to serving the Academy and continually advancing the PA profession in Connecticut.

We at S&S Management were extremely gratified to be chosen as the recipient of the President's Award in our first year of service to the ConnAPA. Executive Director, Mitch Sorensen, Administrative Assistant, Kirsten Longley, and myself have been very fortunate to work with such great association leaders, and it has helped us greatly in our efforts to build upon the growth and success that this organization has had over the years. Although we have experienced a few challenges along the way, we can look back on our first year as a successful one. We have succeeded in developing certain strategies for achieving membership and educational goals and of course, discovered areas of improvement as well. I hope that to the members, we have made the transition as seamless as possible and represented your organization well. Please contact us by phone or email at any time with specific questions or concerns. We look forward with excitement and enthusiasm to many years ahead working with ConnAPA to offer professional growth through education, networking opportunities, and career guidance.

## ConnAPA Annual Business Meeting & Awards Ceremony

June 27, 2008



Dr. William Frishman gives his presentation.



William Kohlhepp, PA-C, DHSc, addresses attendees.



Justin Champagne, PA-C, gives public relations report.



Jeanine Ondrof, PA-C, receives Award for Service



Mark Tabaka, PA-C, receives Initiative Award.



Michael Thompson, S&S Mgt. receives President's Award



## Vice President's Report by Jeanine Ondrof, PA-C



Connecticut was well represented at AAPA this year. From left to right: Bill Kohlhepp, Cynthia Lord, Patrick Killeen, Jeanine Ondrof, Joseph Varano, John McNabb, Tricia Marriott, Thomas Kodz, Jennifer Madonia-Barr, and Brian McCambley

### CME Dinner Held in New Haven

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Jonathan Herman provided ConnAPA members with an informative lecture entitled: "Hereditary Breast and Ovarian Cancer in Practice Today". This CME dinner was sponsored by Myriad Genetic Laboratories, Inc. Please look for more events throughout the year.

### House of Delegates Highlights, San Antonio

The HOD worked diligently and efficiently to complete its work. Elections were held and our new officers are: Speaker of the House: Bill Fenn; First Vice Speaker: Alan Hull; Second Vice Speaker: Jim Delaney; Nominating Committee: Maryann Ramos and Karl Wagner.

Following are several highlights from the HOD. ConnAPA's resolution entitled "Automated External Defibrillator Availability in Public Venues" was adopted by the house with a minor amendment. There was lively discussion regarding the question of a 10 year recertification cycle for PAs. The resolution was first amended and then passed, supporting the NCCPA as they evaluate PA recertification, removing the wording for a 10 year recertification cycle. Also, the HOD passed a resolution to increase Fellow Member dues to \$250. Thank you to our Connecticut Delegates: Joe Varano, Bill Kohlhepp, and Tom Kodz, and to all of our alternates.

### Northeast Regional Meeting

John McNab, northeast regional representative, lead an informative meeting at our annual AAPA conference. Individual state updates were provided in a relaxed forum. Pennsylvania is working to pass legislation for PAs in their state to prescribe under DOs. Many states are dealing with the issue of radiation technicians as we are here in Connecticut. Delaware is looking to hold its first CME event for its 99 members. Neighboring states have volunteered to help them with this process. New Jersey is experiencing trouble recruiting members to serve in leadership roles. Like many states, they have a select few that are doing the majority of the work. Rhode Island is working on holding a full day CME in the winter or spring. Massachusetts is looking at the physician:PA ratio for supervision. The region's escrow fund may be used to support a northeast regional meeting at CORE, to be held in Feb. 2009.

**We are looking for delegates and alternate delegates to serve on the House of Delegates in San Diego, at the 2009 AAPA Annual Meeting. If you are interested, please contact Jeanine Ondrof at [jeanineon@yahoo.com](mailto:jeanineon@yahoo.com)**



### Advertise Here!

Each issue of ConnAPA News is mailed to nearly 600 members.

Publication Date	Deadline	Type of Publication
November	October 15th	Fall 2008 Edition
February	January 15th	Winter 2009 Edition
May	April 15th	Spring 2009 Edition
August	July 15th	Summer 2009 Edition

### **PA Needed**

Specialty: Internal Medicine

Location: Bloomfield, CT

ProHealth Physicians seeks an additional full-time PA to join its busy, multi-physician Internal Medicine practice in Bloomfield.

New/experienced PAs may send CV to Debra Colaci at [dcolaci@prohealthmd.com](mailto:dcolaci@prohealthmd.com).

## **CONNECT WITH YOUR NEXT PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT**

### **WOULD YOU LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OVER 1,000 PAs IN CONNECTICUT AND OVER 60,000 PAs NATIONALLY?**

The Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants web site features the only **ON-LINE JOB BANK** service, **EXCLUSIVELY FOR PAs**, in Connecticut.

**PLACING AN AD IS EASY.** Just visit [www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org) and fill in the form, following the directions. Our secure website accepts payments by Mastercard, VISA, and American Express.

ConnAPA Job Bank Ads are **COST-EFFECTIVE**. Forty-five (45) day postings are just \$250/PA job when posted directly by an employee, and \$325 when posted by a placement service.

**WWW.CONNAPA.ORG** is the place to go for the most current information about continuing medical education, PA practice and JOB LEADS.



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Order forms available on  
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[www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org)

## ConnAPA Logo Apparel

Choose From:

- |                                 |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| •Men's Polo Shirt               | \$28      |
| •Women's Polo Shirt             | \$26      |
| •Hooded Sweatshirt              | \$30      |
| •Full Zip Hooded Sweatshirt     | \$32.50   |
| •Two-tone cap                   | \$15      |
| •Long and Short sleeve t-shirts | \$15-\$18 |
| •Women's scoop-neck t-shirt     | \$18      |

Please contact Justin Champagne at  
[Justin\\_champagne@hotmail.com](mailto:Justin_champagne@hotmail.com) for more information.

## News From Yale

By Lauren Swisher, PA-S & Nicholas Bonomo, PA-S

The Class of 2009 started off the summer by continuing involvement in many activities on campus and within the community. Volunteering at the Haven free clinic in New Haven was continued by many PA students during the summer, giving those involved an opportunity to practice their patient care skills as well as to give back to the community. In addition, several students have been volunteering with Columbus House providing blood pressure and glucose screenings to the homeless in New Haven.

Six members of the class of 2009

also attended the AAPA annual conference in San Antonio.

They spent their time at the conference attending lectures, attending Yale alumni activities, and meeting fellow Physician Assistant students. These six students were a great representation for the class of 2009 in San Antonio.

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, the Yale PA students participated in a softball game with the Quinnipiac PA students at Quinnipiac University. Two games were played followed by a potluck lunch, and the event was a great success.



**GRADUATES**  
BE SURE TO  
TELL  
CONNAPA  
YOUR NEW  
CONTACT  
INFO



## Connecticut Chapter of The American College of Surgeons Professional Association, Inc. (CTACSPA)

### 2008 Call For Abstracts

Papers will be presented at the CTACSPA Annual Meeting on  
October 24, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Waterbury, CT

Please visit [www.ctas.org](http://www.ctas.org) for further information  
Or contact Jennifer Madonia-Barr, PA-C at [pa904@comcast.net](mailto:pa904@comcast.net).





## Quinnipiac University Report

By Emily Pally, PA-S

On July 12<sup>th</sup>, Quinnipiac University hosted Yale University for a QU PA vs. Yale PA Softball Tournament. Large crowds were in attendance to cheer on their favorite PA school and players. The event was a huge success with both games won by the Quinnipiac Bobcats, but resilient Yale has already challenged QU to a volleyball rematch.

Quinnipiac PA students were well represented at the AAPA Conference in San Antonio, TX. They were named Outstanding

Student Society by SAAAPA, the award recognizing outstanding service to the profession in public education, public service, promotion of diversity and professional involvement during the 2007-2008 academic year. They were also honored for raising the most money out all of the student societies for the Host City Prevention Campaign benefiting The Children's Shelter. As part of the HCPC for the PAF, QU was recognized for donating 103 children's books. After two days of voting in the

AOR and working the HOD, QU representatives appreciated their experiences working with AAPA policy-making bodies. Kathleen Swift, from the QU PA Class of 2009, was appointed to the PAF-Resource Development Committee as the student representative for SAAAPA. After a week of learning and viewing the beautiful sites of San Antonio, the students are greatly looking forward to a trip to San Diego next year.



### New Newsletter Editor Found!

ConnAPA is extremely happy to announce that we have found a new Newsletter Editor. We are sad to see Alison Hall leave the post she has filled for 8 years, but we are glad she has remained on staff in another capacity as co-chair for the Policies & Procedures Committee. Likewise, we are proud to introduce Lori Pazameta, who will be the new Editor for ConnAPA News.

Lori attended the Quinnipiac University PA Program from 2004 to 2006. She has worked clinically at Backus Hospital for the past year in Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism.

Lori comes to ConnAPA with a desire to help promote and advance the PA practice in the state of Connecticut. While she may be new to ConnAPA's staff, she is no stranger. She has been active with her phone calls and emails to ConnAPA over the past year regarding many issues, and she has shown her interest in helping serve ConnAPA. We would like to officially welcome Lori to the staff and introduce her to the membership.

For those wishing to submit articles or ideas to Lori for the ConnAPA News, please email her at [loril1967@gmail.com](mailto:loril1967@gmail.com).

Sincerely,  
Justin Champagne, MHS, PA-C



## ConnAPA Scores Legislative Victories

Continued from page 3

Once the Democratic leadership of the Legislature and the Governor decided not to adjust the budget, bills with fiscal notes were not voted on. The bill sought to address the nursing and allied health professional shortage through a number of initiatives; it included loan forgiveness for professionals who agreed to remain on the faculty of nursing or allied health education programs for five years. It included physician assistants.

With passage of HB 5902, now Public Act 08-79, all licensed hospitals in Connecticut will need to develop a plan for ensuring adequate nursing staff to ensure proper care of patients. Commencing July 1, 2009, upon request each nurse staffing plan will be submitted to the Department of Public Health. The plan must promote collaborative practice in the hospital that improves the level of patient services. The Governor signed the bill on May 27<sup>th</sup>.

### ***Controlled Substance Registrations Now Biennial and Incorporates Fee***

HB 5772, now Public Act 08-25, increases the registration certificate period for controlled substance practitioners from one to two years. To correspond with the longer registration period, the fee increases from \$10 to \$20. It is effective on October 1, 2008.

### **Medical Professional's Profile Enacted by Legislature**

SB 471, now Public Act 08-109, initiated in the Insurance and Real Estate Committee, passed both houses of the General Assembly and will add eight professions to the "profile" that is accessible to consumers on the Department of Public Health web site. All professions who are required to carry liability insurance were added to the concept that was before two different committees; SB 483, was the Judiciary

Committee's identical version which died on the House calendar. The new additions to the profile will be effective on January 1, 2010. Although the legislation will cost approximately \$600,000 over three years to implement, Governor Rell did sign the bill into law on May 27, 2008.

### ***Other Bills of Interest***

A bill to establish a Commission on Health Equity within the Office of the Health Care Advocate passed both chambers as SB 681. Now Public Act 08-171, its purpose is to eliminate disparities in health status based on race, ethnicity or linguistic ability and to improve the quality of health for all citizens.

House Majority Leader Chris Donovan's proposal for a health insurance purchasing pool, HB 5536, "*An Act Establishing The Connecticut Healthcare Partnership*" passed both chambers of the Legislature and was deemed historic. It allows municipalities, nonprofits and small businesses to join the state employee health insurance plan for their employees. New employees will be pooled with state employees. It was uncertain whether the Governor would sign the bill due to anticipated costs to municipalities who will need to reopen contracts. She vetoed the bill on June 13, 2008.

Finally, legislation was passed to increase the per-page cost that providers may charge patients for copying their medical records. It was ultimately included in the DPH statute bill, HB 5701, now Public Act 08-184. It is effective on October 1, 2008. The original bill, HB 5668, "*An Act Concerning Access to Medical Records*" had a public hearing, but there was no further action. Hence, it was revived in the DPH tech revisor bill. The purpose is to increase the per page fee that a

health care provider may charge for the copying of medical records from 45 cents a page to 65 cents per page.

### ***Looking Ahead to 2009***

We cannot overstate how difficult the state's economic situation may be by the time the 2009 session convenes in January. Some are predicting a deficit of \$1 billion.

We have already begun work to set the stage for introducing legislation next session, a long session that begins in January

### ***Legislative Retirements- House Speaker Amann - Rep. Christel Truglia Not Seeking Re-Election***

Major leadership changes will take place in the House next year. Speaker James Amann of Milford announced his retirement from the chamber at the end of his term with two weeks left in the session. It is expected that Majority Leader Rep. Chris Donovan of Meriden will be the next Speaker of the House and Rep. Denise Merrill of Mansfield the next Majority Leader. Also included in the list of legislators not seeking re-election is Stamford State Representative Christel Truglia. Both Speaker Amann and Rep. Truglia have been long-time advocates for the profession, and they will be sorely missed!

Please let us know if you have any questions about the 2008 legislative session. The "action" now switches to the political campaigns—all 36 seats in the State Senate and 151 seats in the State House are up for election this November. There are twenty veteran legislators who announced that they would not be seeking re-election this coming Fall. Two House members are seeking Senate seats. There are primary challenges on August 12th in some veterans' districts including districts in the cities of Hartford and Bridgeport.



## Reach Out to The Elderly and Improve Their Health Literacy: Participate in the NBC 30 Health & Wellness Festival

By Justin Champagne, PA-C

In its continued efforts to improve health literacy in our nation, the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) is encouraging constituent organizations, like ConnAPA, to participate in the second phase of the Quality Care Through Health Literacy Program by providing individualized medication cards for the elderly population. This is a very easy event to participate in and is a great way to get PAs out into the community. As the event hosts, we would be transferring medication names and directions from patient's medication bottles to a medication card. We would also be educating patients about what the medications are used for and providing basic education about different disease entities. ConnAPA is seeking volunteers to assist us in this endeavor at the **NBC 30 Health &**

**Wellness Festival** at the CT Convention Center, which takes place on October 25-26, 2008 from 10am – 5pm. ConnAPA wants to get involved and wants you to get involved and help Connecticut's patients too!

With the voluminous number of pharmaceuticals out there, many patients are confused and unsure as to which medication is treating which condition. We can help make it clear for them so that when they take their medication, they at least know what they're taking it for.

In a perfect world, patients would take all their medications all the time; but the reality is, some are forced to pick and choose which medications they will take. This may be based on factors such as

finances, side effects, relative importance of the disease/condition being treated, quality of life, pill burden, etc. By clearly explaining which medication treats which condition, we may be able to help guide the patients into making better decisions if it comes down to taking only a percentage of all of their meds.

So please join ConnAPA on this fun day. This will be an opportunity to potentially reach the needs of hundreds of Connecticut's patients!

For more information, or if you are interested in participating in this event, please contact: Justin Champagne at [justin\\_champagne@hotmail.com](mailto:justin_champagne@hotmail.com) or ConnAPA at [connapa@ssmgt.com](mailto:connapa@ssmgt.com)

## ConnAPA Assisting Hospital-Based PAs Facing Challenging Times

By Bill Kohlhepp, DHSc, PA-C

These are challenging times for hospitals and the PAs that work in them. In response, the Connecticut Academy of PAs (ConnAPA) is making a special effort to engage hospital-based PAs in addressing those challenges. We have established an Ad Hoc Professional Practice Sub-Committee for Hospital-based PAs committed to identifying issues that affect the PA's ability to provide care in hospitals as well as identifying ways in which to improve care, improve compliance with regulatory policy,

and maximize patient access to quality, affordable healthcare. The Membership Committee is doing its part with this effort by assuring that the maximum number of hospital-based PAs can be involved in this effort. Our plan is to work together with key contacts at each hospital to identify those PAs who have not yet joined ConnAPA and to personally invite them to join. Since this hospital-based effort focused first on assisting ConnAPA members, getting PAs at those hospitals to join will assure that all PAs in the hospital

might participate in future meetings.

One of the key messages that we will be trying to get across to the non-members is that state chapters are important to the lives of PAs in practices all across the nation. Specifically, we want to remind them of all the ways that ConnAPA works on behalf of all PAs practicing in the state and how ConnAPA affords those PAs a broad range of support at all stages of their careers. We will certainly be highlighting the benefits of having the appropriate professional support of



a committed lobbyist and association staff. We also will reinforce the importance of being able to accomplish ConnAPA's most critical activity which is to aggressively advocate for PA interests and to be sure that PAs are well represented in Hartford. Finally, we will remind them of just how important ConnAPA is in keeping PAs and PA students in the state informed about changes in the practice environment.

As we have rolled out our effort with a few select hospitals, we have been surprised to hear from some non-members the question, "What has ConnAPA done on my behalf?" Thus, we developed an e-mail to send to non-member PAs at those hospitals that outlines some of our most important accomplishments that were realized just this past year. With that e-mail we will also attach the membership brochure which lists the

annual improvements over the past ten years made to the practice environment in Connecticut by the powerful statewide voice of ConnAPA.

Membership recruitment is key to ConnAPA's future as less than half of the PAs in the state are members. With increased membership ranks, our efforts to improve the practice environment for PAs in the state can be even more effective. This effort with hospital-based PAs is only one of the efforts planned by ConnAPA to invite non-members into the organization. The Membership Committee also plans to roll out an Each One, Reach One campaign in September. The campaign will reward current members who get non-member colleagues to join ConnAPA. Details will be announced on the ConnAPA website ([www.connapa.org](http://www.connapa.org)).

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



## The 22nd Annual Charter Oak Conference

March 29, - April 1, 2009