



NEWS LEAK

The Newsletter of TAPAN North & East Region



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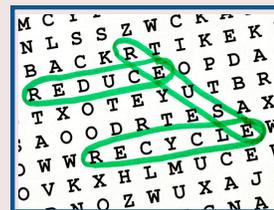
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FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT



Kim Register BSN, RN-BC
President, TAPAN N&E Region
2nd VP TAPAN State Board

Greetings TAPAN members!

It is with great excitement and humility that I introduce myself as your new President for the Northeast and East Region of TAPAN. I also have the honor of serving on the TAPAN State Board as 2nd Vice President, and I look forward to representing our region's voice at the state level. I've been a nurse for over 31 years, with the last 8 years dedicated to working in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Along the way, I earned my Med-Surg certification through the ANCC in 2002, which has helped shape my journey in the nursing profession.

I know I have big shoes to fill following our immediate past president, Kristi Denton, who did an outstanding job leading our region. Kristi's leadership and vision have set the bar high, and I'm committed to continuing the work she started and advancing the mission of TAPAN.

One of my key goals for this term is to not only increase our membership, but also to drive greater participation at both regional and state levels. We have so much to offer as a community of nurses, and I want to ensure that more of us are actively engaging, learning, and supporting one another

As we kicked off my first term in September, we held a virtual meeting, which brought together 26 members from across our region. I was thrilled to see our region's members come together despite the challenges of a virtual format. We were also fortunate to have a significant increase in participants from our region at the state conference in Conroe, TX, which highlighted the growing enthusiasm and commitment to our cause.

In October, we took a major step with our first hybrid meeting and volunteer activity. The turnout was fantastic, with 12 members attending in person at the George Hawkins Library in Arlington and 20 others joining us via TEAMS. After the meeting, 10 of us walked over to Mission Arlington to serve the underprivileged in the surrounding area. By combining meetings and volunteer work, my goal is to reduce the number of weekends members need to dedicate, making it easier to stay involved without sacrificing precious time.

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FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT



continued from page 2

Looking ahead, November promises exciting opportunities. I will be attending the ASPAN-led Professional Development Institute in Kentucky, where I'll learn about the national restructuring of ASPAN and how that will impact us at the regional level. This knowledge will be invaluable as we continue to evolve as an organization.

We're also planning several upcoming events (details coming soon):

- ✓ **Thanksgiving Day:** Our region will serve at Mission Arlington, delivering turkeys and groceries to families in need.
- ✓ **December 13th:** Our next in-person meeting.
- ✓ **December 20th:** Our volunteer opportunity at Operation Care, where we will be serving the homeless of Dallas County.

As we continue into the year, I'm eager to collaborate with all of you to ensure that our region thrives through increased membership, participation, and professional growth. Together, we'll continue the important work of supporting each other and advancing nursing excellence. I look forward to a productive and fulfilling year with all of you. Thank you for your dedication to your professional organization.

Committed to our mission,

Kim Register BSN, RN-BC
President, TAPAN N&E Region
2nd VP TAPAN State Board

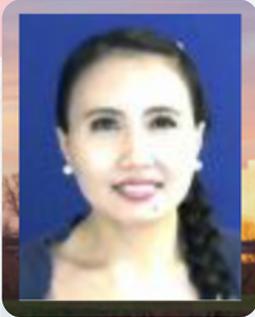
UPCOMING EVENTS

2025

NOV 27	will serve at Mission Arlington
DEC 13	N&E in-person meeting
DEC 20	volunteer at Operation Care

2026 EVENTS CLICK HERE

Learning as I go, growing with you



Hi everyone,

I am so excited (and a little nervous) to bring you this very first edition of our TAPAN North and East Newsletter. When I said yes to becoming News Leak editor, my first reaction was *"Uh oh..... I've never done this before!"* 😊 I've never edited a newsletter in my life.... so consider this my learning curve in progress.

But then I remembered, nursing itself is full of firsts. None of us started out knowing it all, but we learned with time, teamwork, and a little laughter along the way.

That's exactly how I see this space. I don't want this newsletter to be just a list of dates, policies, and reminders (though yes, you'll find those too!). I want it to feel like us—our teamwork, our growth, our funny moments, and our inspiring ones. From celebrating big achievements to spotlighting the small everyday wins, this is a chance to see ourselves beyond the scrubs and shift reports.

I know I'll make mistakes here and there (probably an extra comma or two 😊), but my hope is that this becomes something you look forward to reading, something that truly reflects the heart of Perianesthesia nursing. So, send me your stories, your ideas, even your jokes, I'll take it all.

Here's to a fresh start! Let's make this newsletter something we can all enjoy and be proud of, celebrating one another, and showcasing the spirit of our amazing team.

And yes, I'll be learning (and probably making typos 😊), but I promise to keep it real, keep it heartfelt, and most of all, keep it us.

Your rookie editor, doing my best with spellcheck, 😊

Catherine Ocampo

BSN, RN, PMGT-BC, CCRN - CMC - CSC, CPAN
catherine.ocampo@utsouthwestern.edu

SUBMISSION & PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Season	Submission Deadline	Publication Schedule
SPRING EDITION	February 15	March 15
SUMMER EDITION	May 15	June 15
FALL EDITION	August 15	September 15
WINTER EDITION	November 15	December 15

SUBMIT ✉ catherine.ocampo@utsouthwestern.edu

Let's Grow Together



Innovation: Protecting Postoperative Patients through Developing a New EPIC Documentation for EXPAREL



Tamla Wells
RN, BSN, CCRN

In the nursing field, we often talk about patient care, excellence, innovation, and teamwork. However, in our daily busy nursing practices, we experience patient care, excellence, and teamwork, but rarely are there innovations. After witnessing repeated incident reports, I decided to take the time and innovate.

In March 2025, I encountered two post-operative patients at UT Southwestern (UTSW) PACU that received the EXPAREL injection pre-operatively but did not have the required EXPAREL band on their wrist post-operatively. From speaking with PACU Management and the Patient Safety Coordinator, I discovered that there have been several incident reports involving EXPAREL at UTSW. I planned to take action.

Here's a brief background on EXPAREL, it is a long-acting local anesthetic to manage postsurgical pain. EXPAREL can be given preoperatively by an Anesthesiologist via a nerve block in our specialized Perianesthesia block area. At UTSW an EXPAREL band should be placed on the patient and worn for 96 hours after surgery. This EXPAREL band alerts other providers that this medication has been given, and additional anesthetic drugs (such as Lidocaine) cannot be given within 96 hours following administration of EXPAREL due to serious reactions.

SIGNS OF TOXICITY FROM EXPAREL:

If you experience any of the symptoms listed below after discharge from the hospital, please visit the nearest Emergency Department immediately.

- Metallic taste in mouth
- Numbness of tongue
- Lightheadedness
- Visual and auditory disturbances
- Muscular spasms
- Unconsciousness
- Convulsions
- Coma
- Respiratory arrest
- Cardiac arrest



Figures 4, 5, 6: Signs and symptoms

Summary Selected to print

IMPORTANT SAFETY AND PRECAUTION INFORMATION:

- Please keep your green EXPAREL wristband on for 96 hours (4 days) after receiving your EXPAREL injection.
- If you visit a hospital or a dentist in the next 96 hours, please show this wristband to your health care provider.
- The wristband will notify health care providers to avoid further EXPAREL or other local anesthetic injections.



Figure 3: EXPAREL wristband
Source: UTSW services

- Avoid injection of other local anesthetic (e.g., lidocaine, ropivacaine) with EXPAREL or after recently receiving EXPAREL by your doctor. This may cause adverse reactions or toxic levels of the active ingredient, bupivacaine, to collect in the blood.
- Tell your health care provider if you have liver disease, since this may affect how the active ingredient (bupivacaine) in EXPAREL is removed from the body.

Photos from UTSW's EXPAREL education handout



continued on page 6

Innovation: Protecting Postoperative Patients through Developing a New EPIC Documentation for EXPAREL

continued from page 5



My assessment concluded that there were safety issues from post-operative patients in PACU

without an EXPAREL band. There was a need to create dedicated charting areas in EPIC to confirm EXPAREL band placement for patient safety and to avoid possible serious interactions of medications. Based on the situation, I recommended that the EPIC Team create 2 new areas: one EPIC box to chart the initial placement of an EXPAREL band by the Pre-Op block nurse and a separate EPIC box to chart the confirmation of the EXPAREL band by the PACU nurse. Both charting areas were necessary to ensure compliance of this EXPAREL band placement due to patient safety.

To start the process, I completed a RedCap Interprofessional Documentation Optimization Request and SBAR to request a new EPIC documentation box for EXPAREL bands in PACU. I also contacted a Senior Patient Safety Coordinator to obtain data related to incident reports related to EXPAREL missing bands. In April 2025, I gave a PowerPoint presentation for the Nursing Informatics Council. My project was approved and forwarded to the EPIC team to develop. From April-August 2025, I sent various emails to the EPIC team, related to the development of this new EPIC documentation box. In August 2025, the final new EPIC Boxes and Banners were completed, and the project affected UTSW Medical Center. Group Email was sent to all UTSW nurses related to the New EPIC changes.

The Final EPIC new boxes included specific places for the PACU nurses and Inpatient nurses to chart the presence of an EXPAREL band. The PACU nurses have an EPIC box to chart PLACEMENT and/or VERIFICATION of the EXPAREL band. Plus, the PACU nurses have an Orange Banner that appears in the Bedside Shift Report that states, "Verify EXPAREL armband is applied." The Inpatient nurses have an EPIC box to VERIFY the EXPAREL band. In addition, the Inpatient nurses have an Aqua Color Banner that appears in the Professional Exchange Report that states, "EXPAREL block armband applied (Do Not Administer Lidocaine for 96 Hours)."

Overall, these new EXPAREL band boxes and banners in EPIC alert other providers that this medication has been given, and additional anesthetic drugs (such as Lidocaine) cannot be given within 96 hours following administration of EXPAREL due to serious reactions. I was very proud that my one innovation positively ensures patient safety and protects postoperative patients in the entire UTSW Medical Center. It is true, "one person can make a difference and everyone should try" (J.F.Kennedy).



REFERENCE:

- 1) UTSW. (n.d.). EXPAREL documentation-EPIC Tip Sheet.
- 2) UTSW. (n.d.). EXPAREL education handout
- 3) UTSW. (n.d.). Perianesthesia Liposomal Bupivacaine (Exparel)
- 4) UTSW. (n.d.). UHd NR 7-5145 SOP EXPAREL USAGE – DEPARTMENTAL SOP

What the State Conference Meant to Me



Kalaivani Kanakasabai
MSN, RN, CAPA
Membership and Marketing Chair

The State Nursing Perianesthesia Conference brought together nurses, educators, and healthcare leaders to discuss current trends, evidence-based practices, and innovations in perianesthesia care. The event focused on enhancing patient safety, improving recovery outcomes, and strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration in preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative settings.

The topic I really like was 'Nursing care after nasal sinus surgery' by Dr. Kevin Smith, where he emphasized on identification of early signs and symptoms of complications. Also liked 'SGLT-2/GLP1ra Perianesthesia implications', 'Workplace violence and active shooter preparedness

The conference reinforced the vital role perianesthesia nurses play in ensuring safe surgical experiences and highlighted the importance of continued education, teamwork, and innovation in nursing practice.

Target Audience: All perianesthesia nurses
Location: Conroe, TX

September 26, 2025 Presidential Banquet
Registration 5:00pm-6:00pm;
Program 6:00pm-10:00pm

September 27, 2025 Education Sessions
Registration 7:30am-8:00am;
Program 8:00am-5:15pm;
Evaluations 5:15pm-5:30pm

PROGRAM TOPICS
Herbal Supplements; Migraine Treatments; Regional Anesthesia; SGLT-2 and GLP-1ra; Corneal Abrasions; Workplace Violence; and Legal Considerations in Perianesthesia Practice

OUTCOME
To enable the nurse to increase knowledge on perianesthesia implications of herbal supplements, migraine treatment post-nasal sinus surgery, regional anesthesia, corneal abrasions, workplace violence, SGLT-2 and GLP-1 receptor agonists, and legal considerations in perianesthesia practice demonstrated by 80% or more of the participants scoring 80% or higher on the post test.

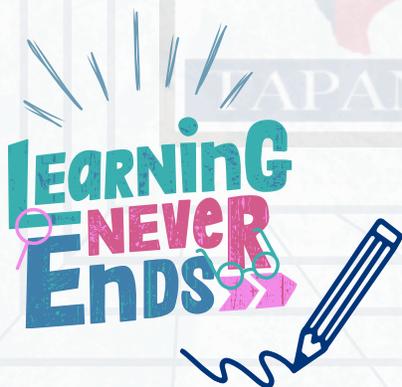
ACCREDITATION
This activity has been approved for 9.0 contact hours by the American Society of Perianesthesia Nurses. The American Society of Perianesthesia Nurses is accredited as an approver of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

FACULTY
Ursula Mellinger, BSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA; Dr. Kevin Smith; Dr. Raymond Mody; Dr. Nadia Hernandez; Dr. Luke Carroll; Patty Charles, BSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA, Stephanie Lombard, MLS, BSN, RN and 15 Poster Presentations

TAPAN Texas Association of Perianesthesia Nurses

49TH ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE
September 26- 27, 2025
Earn 9.0 Contact Hours

"UNSEEN, ESSENTIAL, EXTRAORDINARY: THE PERIANESTHESIA NURSE"



Kalai



Kalai, Hazzel, Maricris & Kristi



Hazzel, Lynette, Kim, Sierra, Terry, Kalai, Denise & Maricris

Photos from Kalai taken in Conroe, TX during TAPAN's 49th Annual State Conference 2025



ASPAN

Perianesthesia Development Institute

“Moving to the Future and Accepting the Challenges”



Lynette Alcorn

BSN, RN, CCRN, CPAN, CAPA
TAPAN N&E Advisor 2024-2026
TAPAN State VP 2025-2027

Traveling to Kentucky for PDI provided another opportunity to gather with other Perianesthesia Nurses around the world. I have accepted the challenge and am looking forward to moving to the future! The presentation by Toni Zito and Amy Berardinelli was excellent. *“The Power of One, The Impact of Many: Perianesthesia Nurses as Change Agents.”* As change agents Perianesthesia Nurses demonstrate resilience and positivity. Advocating for practice improvement and utilizing interprofessional collaboration and clear communication is key. The Kotter’s 8 Step Change Model is one I will utilize as we make great progress with the restructuring of ASPAN. One statement which resonated with me was “Leaders create the environment so that it thrives”. As Leaders it is imperative that we create thriving environments, this will ensure the success and longevity of our amazing organization.



PERIANESTHESIA DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (PDI)

Moving to the Future and Accepting the Challenges

November 7 - 8, 2025
Marriott Downtown Hotel
Louisville, Kentucky

PDI Brochure



Lynette & Kim



Lynette & Kim



Kim, Felicia & Lynette



Texas
Lynette & Kim



Photos from Lynette taken in Louisville, KY during PDI



HOW WE CELEBRATE PERIANESTHESIA NURSES and WORK TOGETHER



Crystal Robinson
MS, RN, CPAN
Communications Coordinator

Our Unit Based Council finds ways to boost morale and make each staff member feel like a special part of the team. Our manager and supervisor provide guidance and oversight for staff to expand their leadership skills and professional development growth. We enjoy celebrating our staff for their years of service milestones also!



GI Lab Staffs



THD Main PACU Staffs



L → R: Ranada Jasmin & Susan Cooper (manager) & Kim



THD Main PACU Staffs

THD PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS : Service Awards, Unit Gift Swap, and PANAW Celebration

continued on page 10

HOW WE CELEBRATE PERIANESTHESIA NURSES and WORK TOGETHER



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Over this year, we have enjoyed celebrating the PACU staff with gifts and treats during PANAW in February. We also participated in an adopt-a-unit gift swap to highlight the awesome work other perianesthesia areas are doing. This is the first time we did this at THD. The PACU team brought gift items to recognize the GI Lab staff. Both departments met up and did a gift basket exchange that was incredible! The participation was rewarding

We chose to complete a Community Food Drive project for the holidays. We collaborated with Day Surgery and other Peri-op areas. So far there has been a ton of donations to truly bless several families during such trying times where food scarcity and insecurity is so high. The donations are not even done! So many people are thrilled to share gratitude and resources to meet the needs of local communities.

As a unit, we strive to provide outstanding, safe, and compassionate care. Many of us love what we do and continue to make a difference every day in any way we can. We make our patient's experience as comfortable as possible and do so willingly! I am a proud PeriAnesthesia Nurse and honored to work at THD Dallas!

Crystal Robinson
MS, RN, CPAN
Communications Coordinator



THD Main Day Surgery and PACU Staffs



THD Main Day Surgery and PACU Staffs



THD Main PACU Staffs



THD Main PACU Staffs



THD Holiday Food Drive Collaboration



<https://netapan.nursingnetwork.com>



www.facebook.com/TAPANNERegion

From Fear to Hope: Honoring Survivors, Remembering Loss, and Why I will Never Take Mammogram for Granted.



Freggie Andres
BSN, RN

Breast Cancer Awareness hits close to home for me – not just because of what I've seen in loved ones, but also because of my own personal scare. A while back, I went through the anxiety of being called back after a routine mammogram. That waiting, the questions, and the fear of the unknown –so many “what ifs” ran through my head - it was overwhelming. Thankfully, further test showed it was nothing serious. But that moment reminded me how real this is and why it is important to never delay screening. Early detection truly save lives.

In my family, breast cancer is not just a word – it's a story lived out in many ways. I have family members who are survivors, strong women who fought through treatments and came out on the other side with resilience and hope. I also carry the memory of a loved one who lost the battle, a reminder of the painful reality that breast cancer can bring. And right now, I know acquaintances who are in the thick of it, facing treatment and holding on courage day by day.

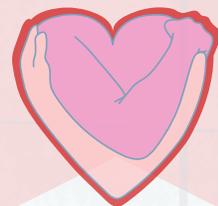
The journey with breast cancer – whether it's your own or someone you love –is filled with heavy struggles: fear, uncertainty, physical challenges, and emotional weight. But there are also wins: the relief of early detection, the joy of remission, strength found in community, and the unshakable spirit of those who refuse to give up.

This is why awareness matters. This is why regular mammograms, self- checks, and listening to our bodies are so important. Breast cancer touches all of us -directly or indirectly - and by staying proactive, encouraging one another, and honoring both the fighters and the ones we've lost, we can keep moving toward more wins than losses.

Freggie Andres BSN, RN



Fight
Cancer!



Breast Cancer Awareness: Stories of Strength

2 years
Breast
Cancer
Survivor

“
Facing breast cancer has been one of the hardest battles of my life. It tested my strength, my faith, and my spirit in ways I never expected. There were days of fear, pain, and uncertainty—but also days of hope, laughter, and love from those around me. This journey has taught me resilience, the importance of self-care, and that I am stronger than I ever imagined. Breast cancer does not define me—it’s a chapter in my story, but not the whole book. I am here, I am healing, and I am grateful.”



Jazzmin Edwards, PCT
Breast Cancer Survivor
for 2 years

Team Update,

Jazzmin received our collective thoughts! She is on way to recovery and feeling way better today! She wanted to extend her deep appreciation to the whole team standing with her during this journey!



Thank y'all for being an amazing work family!

Charles

HOPE

YOU'VE
TOTALLY GOT
THIS!



L → R: Jazzmin Edwards, LaSayalli “Sally” Lett
and LaToya Holland

Breast Cancer Awareness: Stories of Strength

3 years
Breast
Cancer
Survivor

“

H

aving Breast Cancer makes you find strength that you never knew you had. You have to be strong when you have no choice. Even after being in remission, you see and feel all the changes in your life, mind, as well as the body. Everything becomes different and a new normal. With me having to stay on what I call "maintenance medications" for the next 5 to 7 years every day is a constant fight to stay compliant in order to keep my risk low from cancer coming back. A everyday battle to keep going see another day and wanting to live longer. I have never taken Life for granted since working in healthcare for many years. In this second chance in life that I have been given, I Pray, Live, Love, and Laugh whole a lot more. I take a risk and step out of my box every now and again. You only get one life! Live it up! And I take it one day at a time, still if I need to.

”



LaSanyali "Sally" Lett, PCT
Breast Cancer Survivor
for 3 years



Breast Cancer Awareness: *Stories of Strength*

5 years
Breast
Cancer
Survivor



Joannah Dougherty, CCA
Breast Cancer Survivor
for 5 years

Every Day Is a Gift: My Cancer Journey and the Purpose It Revealed

When I look back on my cancer journey, one truth rises above everything else: **gratitude changes everything.** Before my diagnosis, I understood gratitude in a surface-level way—saying thank you, appreciating nice moments, and trying to stay positive. But cancer taught me a deeper, more powerful form of gratitude. It taught me to appreciate the quiet miracle of simply being alive. It taught me that every single day is a gift, whether it arrives wrapped in joy or struggle.

A New Understanding of “Coincidence”

Since then, even my definition of coincidence has changed. I no longer believe that the people I meet by chance are simply random encounters. Lately, I’ve been meeting people who seem to appear in my life with purpose—individuals who inspire me, guide me, or support the goals I’m working toward. It feels as if the universe is gently placing the right souls in my path at the right time.

Cancer didn’t just shift my perspective; it shifted the way I interpret the connections around me.

I was diagnosed at the beginning of the pandemic, a time when the world was filled with fear, uncertainty, and isolation. Facing cancer in the middle of global chaos felt overwhelming, yet it also opened my eyes in ways I never expected. While the world shut down, my understanding of life opened up. Each breath, each sunrise, each ordinary moment became something sacred.

I learned how fortunate I am to still be here. Surviving cancer felt like being handed a second chance—an invitation to live with intention, to slow down, to notice the beauty I once rushed past.

continued on page 15



Breast Cancer Awareness: *Stories of Strength*

continued from page 14



A Second Chance, A New Purpose

Surviving cancer gave me more than time—it gave me clarity. I don't want to go back to living life on autopilot. This second chance has lit a fire in me: I want to live with purpose. I want my experiences—my struggles, my healing, my resilience—to mean something beyond my own survival.

Most of all, I want to help others. Whether it's offering hope, sharing my story, or simply being a reminder that life is fragile but beautiful, I feel called to make a difference. If my journey allows even one person to feel less alone, more hopeful, more seen, then every hardship has meaning.

Looking Forward

Cancer changed me, but not in the way people fear. It didn't make me bitter or broken. It made me grateful. It made me pay attention. It taught me to cherish what truly matters.

Every day I wake up, I try to honor the gift I've been given. I carry my scars with pride—not as reminders of pain, but as proof of strength. And as I move forward, I do so with purpose, gratitude, and a heart wide open to whatever comes next.

Joanah Dougherty, CCA
Breast Cancer Survivor for 5 years



Breast Cancer Awareness Week Celebration



**BREAST
CANCER
AWARENESS
WEEK**

Oct. 13th - 17th

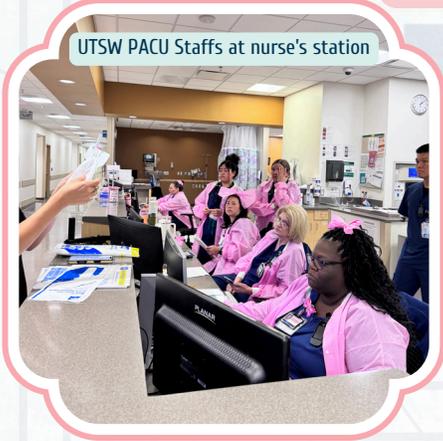
Monday- Pink Power Day
Kick off the week with everyone wearing pink lab coats

Tuesday- Crossword for a Cure
Test your awareness with a fun crossword puzzle and trivia.

Wednesday- Ribbons of Hope
Pin a pink ribbon with someone's name on the ribbon wall
(Survivor, Fighter, or In Memory of a Loved One)

Thursday- Pink Spirit Contest
Accessorize with socks, lanyards, hair bows, etc.
Snap photos for fun little awards.

Friday- Pink & B Together
Stop by the breakroom and enjoy pink-inspired
snacks/treats



Breast Cancer Awareness Week at UTSW



Why Fiber Matters for Your Health



Jimmy Auldridge
PATIENT CARE TECHNICIAN

Dietary fiber – the part of plant foods your body can't digest – is a simple nutrient with powerful effects on long-term health. Found in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds, fiber moves through the digestive tract largely intact, supporting multiple systems along the way.



DID YOU KNOW?

Fiber comes in 2 main types:

- **Soluble fiber** slows digestion, helps regulate blood sugar, and lowers LDL cholesterol.
 - **Insoluble fiber** adds bulk to stool and keeps bowel movements regular.
- Most plant foods contain both, and each contributes to unique physiological benefits.



REFERENCE:
PubMed Central

Benefits Backed by Current Research

Gut & Digestive Health

Fiber improves bowel regularity and supports a balanced gut microbiome – which influences immunity, inflammation, and metabolism. Recent studies show that short-term fiber supplementation can improve microbiota composition and digestion-related quality of life.

Metabolic Health

Fiber slows glucose absorption, reducing blood-sugar spikes and improving insulin sensitivity. Higher intake also correlates with lower obesity rates and better metabolic markers.

Heart Health & Longevity

Decades of research show fiber lowers the risk of coronary heart disease and cardiovascular mortality. A 2024–2025 series of meta-analyses found higher fiber intake is linked to reduced all-cause mortality and lower risk of cancers including colorectal and pancreatic cancer.

Fiber may also reduce inflammation and support immune regulation through short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) produced by gut bacteria.

Are We Getting Enough?

Most adults consume far less than recommended. Dietary guidelines suggest 14 grams of fiber per 1,000 calories, yet population data consistently shows widespread deficiency.

continued on page 18

Why Fiber Matters for Your Health

continued from page 17

How to Increase Fiber Intake

- ✓ Prioritize whole fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.
- ✓ Swap refined grains for whole-grain versions.
- ✓ Increase intake gradually and drink enough water to minimize digestive discomfort.
- ✓ Consider supplementation if needed under professional guidance.

The Bottom Line

Recent scientific data reinforces a consistent message: ***fiber is essential, not optional.*** It supports gut health, stabilizes blood sugar, lowers cardiovascular risk, and is strongly associated with longer life and reduced disease. Increasing daily fiber intake remains one of the simplest, most impactful dietary changes for better long-term health.

REFERENCE:

- 1) [Mayo Clinic](#) 2) [PubMed Central](#) 3) [MDPI](#) 4) [Frontiers](#) 5) [ScienceDirect ELSEVIER](#)



Jimmy Auldridge
PATIENT CARE
TECHNICIAN



OPEN VOLUNTEER: MISSION ARLINGTON

N&E TAPAN

*Join us in making a
difference to our
community and
people in need!*

11 OCTOBER 2025
10:00 - 12:00

210 W South St, Arlington,
TX 76010

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

- Help the team to organize and pack donations in bags.
- Help the team sorting, separating and stocking donated items.
- Help the team sort out clothes.
- Please wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty, and come with a flexible spirit, ready to work wherever you are needed.

Contact: Nlera 817-791-7819
Kim 817-538-7686



CALL for VOLUNTEERS



<https://netapan.nursingnetwork.com>



www.facebook.com/TAPANNERegion

Giving Time, Gaining Life – The Power Of Volunteering



Niera Santos
BSN, RN, PCCN, CPAN
Volunteer Coordinator

I became the volunteer coordinator for N&E TAPAN starting May 2024, and I've found I gain personal fulfillment from community engagement. It has provided many opportunities for me to professionally network, and I've found further meaning to my organization's success.

At the recent TAPAN Conference held this past September, our region proudly received 1st place for the "Outstanding Region Award" as well as the "Bluebonnet Award," recognizing our outstanding regional accomplishments. Notably, 135 out of the 329 points contributing to the Outstanding Region Award came from volunteer activities, underscoring our strong commitment to community engagement.

When you volunteer, you're offering something precious: your time, energy, and attention. You're not paid with money – you're giving freely, because you care. It can be as simple as setting aside time to: (1) Serve meals to the unhoused like we did at "Taste Community Project" in Ft. Worth; (2) Organize and pack food at the Mission Arlington food pantry; or (3) Or assemble a "Love Box" at Embrace Grace as a gift of hope to women with unplanned pregnancies both in and outside Texas.

However, when you are giving time, the return is far greater, you are gaining life! I believe that the more you give, the richer your own life becomes. Charitable time turns a limited resource into something abundant through connection, compassion, and purpose.

Another profound gain of volunteering is that it boosts happiness and reduces stress. Acts of kindness release dopamine and endorphins (the brain's "feel good" chemicals). Thus giving boosts mental and physical health. One review found that older adults who volunteer report better physical health, less depression, and even lower mortality compared to non-volunteers. (*Mayo Clinic Q and A: Health benefits of volunteering. Abby Smith December 5, 2023.*) Volunteering is associated with lower risk of heart disease and better overall wellness. This finding comes from a 2020 study of 12,998 adults over age 50. Participants who volunteered for 4 years and at least 100 hours per year had reduced risk of early death compared to those who volunteered for 0 hours. Depending on what you do to volunteer, it can help keep you active and social and your brain sharp, which may improve your overall health and prolong your life (*From Healthline Newsletter. Medically reviewed by Lori Lawrenz, PsyD – Written by Sarah Matysiak on July 17, 2025*).

continued on page 21

Giving Time, Gaining Life – The Power Of Volunteering



continued from page 20

Lastly, there is also a spiritual foundation of volunteering and serving others. We are called to use our gifts and abilities to make a positive impact on our communities and beyond. 1 Peter 4:10: "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Volunteering is not just an act of kindness, it is a reflection of faith and commitment to living out the teachings of Christ.

Niera Santos
BSN, RN, PCCN, CPAN



Picture with Ms. Tillie Burgin (middle) founder and director of Mission Arlington on 10/11/2025.

L → R : Niera Santos, Crystal Robinson, Sarojini Pokrel, Terry Brink, Tamla Wells, Kalai Kanakasabai, Kim Register, Lynette Alcorn, Hazzel Gomez and Catherine Ocampo participated in the bagging of rice and beans at the food pantry to be distributed to the surrounding communities.



Catherine, Terry, Niera, Sarojini, Lynette, Kalai, Kim, Tamla & Crystal



L → R: Terry, Catherine, Tamla, Kalai and Niera



Giving instruction to volunteers

Congratulations

to our **FALL** Certification Passers



LEARN MORE

about their Journey to Certification by clicking their photo



Congratulations
CERTIFIED AND PROUD
CAPA ACHIEVER

CERTIFIED
October 01, 2025



ANA JOHNSON, RN, BSN, CAPA

Congratulations
CERTIFIED AND PROUD
CPAN ACHIEVER

CERTIFIED
October 23, 2025



KRISTI DENTON, BSN, RN, CPAN

Your
story
inspires

Congratulations
CERTIFIED AND PROUD
CPAN ACHIEVER

CERTIFIED
November 15, 2025



PHILLIP GOTTE, MSN, RN, CCRN-CMC, CPAN

Be
inspired

Congratulations
CERTIFIED AND PROUD
CPAN ACHIEVER

CERTIFIED
October 30, 2025



BROVON EVANS, BSN, RN, CPAN

Congratulations
CERTIFIED AND PROUD
CPAN ACHIEVER

CERTIFIED
November 07, 2025



TENEISHA BUTLER, BSN, RN, CPAN

BELIEVE
IN
YOURSELF



My Journey to Certification



Ana Johnson
RN, BSN, CAPA



I am truly thankful for earning my certification because it represents dedication, growth, and perseverance.

After I answered 185 questions, I was mentally drained and all that I wanted to do was to see the test results. As I was taking the test, I had notated some questions that I was not sure of, and my plan was to revisit those at the end. By that time, my brain and my eyes were so tired all I could do was click submit, close my eyes and hope for a passing score. Much to my disappointment, the score was not given until I completed a survey. After hastily answering the survey questions, my test score was posted on the screen in green letters with the words "You passed". I was elated to see the green letters announcing that I had indeed passed the test! A flood of emotion overcame me. All those months of waking up early, sacrificing time with family to study and answering questions, turned into excitement and gratitude. At that moment, all I could do was to relax, take a deep breath and thank God for all the love and support throughout.

Studying for the certification accelerated the learning process of the many complexities that we must use in our surgery center. Many times, our personal and professional lives become so busy we have to push learning on ourselves. It wasn't easy to find the time to study, so the key for me was to start early.

For us nurses, learning and education must be a part of our lifestyles to better serve and advocate for our patients.

Earning this certification has strengthened my confidence to better help the patients we care for and make sure they are safe. I am very thankful for my family and JSCA friends that have supported me in many ways by giving me studying tips, lending books and imparting words of encouragement. Also, a special thanks for my team leader, Lynette who is always motivating us to be better nurses and become a lifelong learner.

Before



YOU
GOT
THIS!

After



you are
A·M·A·Z·I·N·G



My Journey to Certification



Kristi Denton
BSN, RN, CPAN
Immediate Past President



my journey to certification is finally complete! To be honest, I was afraid of failing, so I delayed taking the test for quite some time. For years, my TAPAN friends encouraged me to go for it—and I am so grateful that I finally did.

In July, I organized the ASPAN Certification Review and met so many wonderful nurses who were also working toward certification. Their motivation inspired me to take the leap. I began studying in earnest, dedicating three months to preparation. I participated in the ASPAN review course, joined our TAPAN Region's free 12-week study class, and used ABPANC's flashcards and online practice exams. I took advantage of every resource available and leaned on my peers for support, discussions, and shared learning.

Through this process, my knowledge grew tremendously, and I gained a deeper understanding of perianesthesia nursing. Achieving certification has strengthened my knowledge and validated my commitment to lifelong learning and professional excellence.

According to the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Magnet Recognition Program, specialty certification is a key indicator of nursing excellence and professional growth. It demonstrates a nurse's

dedication to improving patient outcomes and advancing the profession through knowledge and leadership.

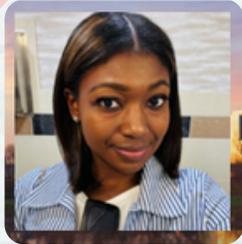
I hope my story encourages you to take the next step toward your own certification. You are not alone—reach out for support, join a study group, and believe in yourself. The journey is challenging but incredibly rewarding. Together, we can continue to elevate our practice and our profession.



Post-study unwind time



My Journey to Certification



Brovon Evans
BSN, RN, CPAN



Hello, my name is Brovon Evans. I have been a registered nurse for eight years. Throughout my nursing career, I have learned and grown tremendously.

This journey has taught me patience, resilience, and the importance of continual self-improvement. I have worked in several specialties in nursing, but PACU has been my absolute favorite. My four years in the peri-anesthesia setting have been both rewarding and inspiring.

After gaining substantial experience in this environment, I knew it was time to take the next step and become a proficient, certified PACU nurse. I was ready to put the skills I had developed into practice on a higher level. Setting this goal motivated me to register for the CPAN exam. At first, studying was challenging, I worried whether I had enough resources to succeed. However, I learned to take full advantage of every available tool including study groups, review sessions, handouts, textbooks, and, most importantly, prayer.

I remember that on test day, right before beginning my exam, I took a moment to say a quick prayer. I manifested that when I finished, I would see the word PASSED, and guess what? I did. I cried tears of joy and gratitude when I saw the word passed in bold green letters. Passing my CPAN exam was one of the major goals for 2025 and achieving it reminded me that it's never too late to reach your goals. Aim high, stay determined, and never give up.



Me and my fur baby Jasie



My Journey to Certification



Teneisha Butler
BSN, RN, CPAN



my name is Teneisha Butler, and I am a proud Dallas native. I graduated from the Baylor Louise Herrington School of Nursing through the accelerated BSN program, eager to dive into the world of nursing.

I began my career in the ER at Arlington Memorial Hospital. At the time, I wasn't sure which specialty I wanted to pursue, but I knew the ER would give me a strong, well-rounded foundation. Those two years were challenging and fast-paced, but they taught me a tremendous amount about patient care, teamwork, and myself.

I eventually transitioned to the PACU at UT Southwestern, where I've now been for four years. PACU has been a great fit for me, and I truly enjoy the work I do each day. Having such supportive and fun coworkers has made the experience even better, and I'm grateful to be part of a team that feels both professional and collaborative.

A recent milestone I'm especially proud of is passing my CPAN exam. I'll admit I was hesitant at first—I heard how difficult it could be—but I set a goal, made a study plan, and pushed through. Earning this certification was something I wanted for a while, and accomplishing it reminded me of the importance of challenging myself and continuing to grow in my nursing journey. I'm excited to see what else the future holds!

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Me, my fiancé Colin and my fur baby Jake



My Journey to Certification



Phillip Jotte
MSN, RN, CCRN-CMC, CPAN



“

Amazing

my CPAN preparation was pretty straightforward. I worked through the PocketPrep question bank (all 500 questions), paid attention to the questions I missed, and built a simple study guide around those gaps. From there, I reviewed the relevant chapters in Drain's PeriAnesthesia Nursing: A Critical Care Approach during the week or two leading up to the exam. It wasn't an elaborate study plan, but it helped me focus on the content that actually shows up in PACU practice.

Earning the CPAN feels meaningful because it validates the clinical judgment and standards I try to bring into my work every day.

”

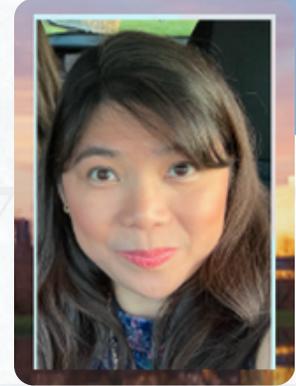
DO
Amazing
THINGS!



Me and my fur baby Cheeze-it

POSITIVE
VIBES

Pitch perfect



Maria "Zelle" Lao
BSN, RN

I was seated on a chair beside my friend and colleague, facing the podium, anticipating being drowsy at one point due to lack of sleep the night before. But I was ready... I had a cup of hot coffee in front of me with a little bit of creamer just right for my taste.

A petite, respectable woman was introduced and started talking about ASPAN Perianesthesia certification/ recertification and test taking. Her cool, clear voice which was modulated and light has kept me listening. I just sat there in my chair, absorbing and reabsorbing a lot of information while highlighting topics that she said I should know to pass the test. I listened to the class and was surprised that I never got sleepy nor bored.

My aim is to take CPAN this fall and pass it. I don't know how to do that with a cruise already planned. So maybe, in Spring 2026 instead?



Ms. Myrna Mamaril has pitch perfect voice that I can still somehow hear now. It was a very informative and easy review that I am sure, will help me pass the test.



L → R: Me, Mona, Catherine & Shanta



UTSW attendees



ASPAN Certification Review in Dallas on July 12, 2025



<https://netapan.nursingnetwork.com>



www.facebook.com/TAPANNERegion

STEP INTO EXCELLENCE:



Schedules and Fees



SPRING 2026 Exam Window Important Dates:

Exam Registration Window – Online
January 1 – April 30

Examination Administration Window
March 15 – May 15



GET
CERTIFIED

WHO'S NEXT?

to be Newly CPAN/CAPA CERTIFIED?

GET
RECOGNIZED

Be the Next Star
of Our Certification Corner!



UPCOMING EVENTS
UPCOMING EVENTS

2026

- JAN 10** N&E online meeting
- FEB 07** PANAW celebration
- MAR 14** N&E in-person meeting




Perianesthesia Nurses
passion and excellence

PeriAnesthesia Nurse Awareness Week
February 2 - 8, 2026



Mark your calendar



ASPAN
American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses

Live Webcasts
Free for ASPAN Members



2026 ASPAN Winter / Spring Webcasts

Free for ASPAN Members

January 25, SUN	Perianesthesia Certification Review 
February 04, WED	Perianesthesia Certification Review 3 Parts (Part1) 
February 11, WED	Perianesthesia Certification Review 3 Parts (Part2) 
February 18, WED	Perianesthesia Certification Review 3 Parts (Part3) 
March 14, SAT	Perianesthesia Certification Review 



READY TO LEVEL UP?

Join



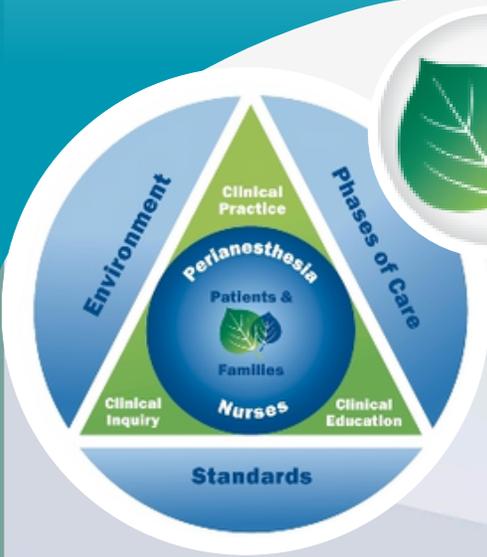
ASPAN
American Society of PeriAnesthesia



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CLICK here for FULL Membership Benefits info

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- All webcasts are **FREE**— over 120 hours
- All continuing education articles are **FREE**
- \$74 off CPAN and CAPA certification exam fees



UPDATE

NORTH- & -EAST
Region

MEMBERSHIP

UPDATE



NEW! MEMBERS 2025

WOW!	September	→	12
WOW!	October	→	0
WOW!	November	→	14



Let's Test Your Word Hunt Skills



Take the challenge and enjoy!

Work Ethic WORDSEARCH

Put your skills to the test and find all the hidden work-ethic words!

O	T	E	A	M	W	O	R	K	S	A	M	A
E	Y	P	P	R	E	L	I	A	B	L	E	C
T	I	R	R	K	E	L	A	B	S	Y	S	C
A	S	O	O	G	N	S	X	T	W	E	U	O
C	K	N	D	S	W	E	P	T	Q	R	P	U
I	E	U	U	Y	L	O	T	E	W	U	P	N
N	G	C	C	P	H	Y	R	R	C	E	O	T
U	N	I	T	Y	P	F	U	J	X	T	R	A
M	Y	M	I	Y	J	V	S	G	Q	E	T	B
M	K	A	V	S	K	E	T	E	V	O	E	L
O	O	I	E	M	G	A	T	K	Y	A	X	E
C	O	L	L	A	B	O	R	A	T	I	O	N

Think you discovered them all?

Email me  your total number of words and the exact words you found and have the chance to be featured as one of our winners!!

Make sure to send in your entry!

Winners and the full answer key will be revealed in our next News Leak Edition!

FALL into *Greatness*
Embrace the season of change
And let your efforts 
Than the *Autumn* leaves

This quote “*Fall into Greatness, embrace the season of change, and let your effort Shine Brighter than Autumn leaves.*” hits home for me because honestly... I was never the brave, adventurous type. I was the nurse who got scared of change, didn’t feel confident, and definitely didn’t think I’d ever “stand out.” But life pushed me, mostly because I’m the breadwinner. I needed to grow, earn more, and take the clinical ladder seriously.

So, I took a certification exam... terrified. But when I passed that first one, I felt something shift inside me. It wasn’t just pride, it was the realization that I could do hard things. That small victory lit a fire in me. One certification turned into two, then three... and eventually five. I surprised myself.

And then came to PACU. I left ICU, the place where I felt invisible and unsure of myself, and suddenly... I started to bloom. PACU became a season of discovery. I found confidence. I found joy. I discovered skills I never knew I had: video editing, making Bluebonnet presentation that actually won awards, and now even editing this newsletter. Who would’ve thought?

Looking back, everything I’ve gained was a mix of **God’s** grace and people who believed in me even when I didn’t. They helped me see my own potential.

So if you’re scared of change like I used to be, here’s my reminder: *fall anyway. You might just land somewhere beautiful... and discover the best version of yourself.* 😊

“Let your effort shine. Let change uncover your gifts. And trust that greatness is already in you – waiting for its season”

Catherine Ocampo

BSN, RN, PMGT-BC, CCRN - CMC - CSC, CPAN

Meet our
TAPAN N&E Region
Board Members 2025 - 2026



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PRESIDENT



Kristi Denton BSN, RN, CPAN
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Crystal Robinson
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Communications Coordinator



Kalai Kanakasabai
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Hazzel Gomez
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Education Coordinator/Chair



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PMGT-BC, CCRN - CMC - CSC, CPAN
Newsletter Editor



President-Elect (1st VP) and
2nd Vice President



Historian