

CME Conference 2026

Event Agenda

Friday, March 13, 2026 at 8:00am CT - Saturday, March 14, 2026 at 4:00pm CT

i All times listed in Central Time (US & Canada).

Friday, March 13, 2026

8:00am - 8:30am

The Morning After (And Every Day Before): Modern HIV & STI Prevention (M)

Ada Sochanska, MPAS, PA-C is a PA who works as System Director of Patient Safety for Baptist Health as well as continuing her infectious diseases practice in the outpatient setting. She has been a member of ARAPA since being a PA-Student and has functioned as a member of the Board of Directors from 2022-2025 through the lifecycle of the presidency. Her passion lies in public health as well as the constant drive for the improvement of healthcare in Arkansas by utilizing PAs in administration, clinical practice and legislative change.

0.5 CE Credits

1. Differentiate between the various PrEP modalities (oral vs injectable) to tailor treatment to patient lifestyles
2. Execute a rapid response protocol for HIV PEP within 72 hour window
3. Implement DoxyPEP protocols for the prevention of bacterial STIs

8:30am - 9:15am

Sponsor Breakfast and Networking Break

9:15am - 10:15am

Updates in HTN and HLD for patients with Diabetes Mellitus (M)

Sheena CarlLee, M.D., program director of the UAMS / Washington Regional Internal Medicine Residency Program, is an associate professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at UAMS. She is board-certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine and specializes in complex and chronic disease management, adult wellness visits, acute care visits and women's health. Dr. CarlLee received her medical degree from UAMS in 2014. She went on to complete her internal medicine residency at the University of Iowa, where she also served as chief resident. After graduation, she became a faculty member at the University of Iowa. She worked for Atrium Health as a primary care physician in Concord, North Carolina, prior to joining UAMS in September 2020. She practices in the Bradley Plaza Internal Medicine Clinic as a primary care physician and spends the remainder of her time in undergraduate and graduate medical education.

1.0 CE Credit

Provide updates in guideline based care of patients with diabetes and comorbidities

Objectives:

- Review guidelines for diagnosis of HTN/HLD
 - Review new therapies
 - Review ongoing assessment intervals
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9:15am - 10:15am

PA Life Without the Burn: Your Financial Freedom Roadmap (B)

Carrie McMahon, MHPE, MPAS, PA-C – National Speaker, Clinician, and Educator With over 26 years of experience as a clinician and educator, Carrie is a dedicated PA whose career spans a diverse array of specialties including family medicine, women's health, plastic surgery, and dermatology. Throughout her career, Carrie has demonstrated an unwavering passion for quality patient care and medical education, making a lasting impact in both the clinical and academic arenas. As a national speaker, Carrie is committed to advancing the PA profession through meaningful dialogue and education. After personally experiencing clinician burnout in 2018, she began exploring the research and literature surrounding this critical issue—particularly the connection between burnout and financial wellness. Carrie is excited to share insights from her extensive clinical and educational background at this year's conference, where she will discuss strategies for preventing burnout through the lens of financial freedom. She looks forward to engaging with colleagues and contributing to the continued growth and resilience of the PA profession.

1.0 CE Credit

PA Life Without the Burn: Your Financial Freedom Roadmap examines the impact of financial stress on burnout and professional practice among PAs. Burnout in PAs—manifesting as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy—has been associated with decreased job satisfaction, impaired clinical performance, increased turnover, and challenges to long-term career sustainability. Financial stress is an important and often underaddressed contributor to PA burnout.

This presentation reviews current data on PA wellness and burnout, highlighting financial stressors commonly experienced by PAs, including educational debt burden, early-career financial strain, lifestyle inflation, and limited formal training in personal financial management. Evidence linking financial worry to psychological distress and decreased well-being is discussed, with attention to how these stressors may affect professional engagement, decision-making, and patient-centered care.

By framing financial wellness as an essential component of PA well-being, this activity supports PAs in developing skills that promote personal and professional sustainability. Addressing financial stress may improve focus, reduce emotional exhaustion, and enhance the PA's ability to engage fully in patient care, interprofessional teams, and long-term career satisfaction.

This educational activity aligns with AAPA's emphasis on PA wellness, professional development, and strategies that support retention, resilience, and high-quality patient care.

10:15am - 11:15am

Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity (M)

Kate Ross Cameron is an Endocrinology PA and Registered Dietitian based out of Fayetteville, AR. She conducted original research on Weight Bias in Medicine as a part of her capstone project through the UAMS PA Program. She has continued to further her education and training on Overweight and Obesity for the past five years. She is eager to share a summary of the newly published Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity in order to further better understanding and treatment for patients affected by these conditions.

1.0 CE Credit

First of its kind clinical guidance on reducing weight stigma in obesity care. The Obesity Association™, a division of the American Diabetes Association®, (Obesity Association) announced the publication of “Weight Stigma and Bias: Standards of Care in Overweight and Obesity—2025,” along with the “Introduction & Methodology” section in BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care. The publication extends the ADA's process and expertise in developing trusted, evidence-based guidelines to obesity care, offering comprehensive standards to reduce weight stigma and improve care for people living with overweight and obesity.

Objectives:

Training: All health care professionals and staff should receive ongoing education on weight bias and stigma beginning in early training and continuing throughout their careers.

Inclusive clinical environments: Clinics should be equipped with appropriate furniture, equipment, and private accommodations that support people of all sizes.

Person-centered communication: Health care professionals are urged to use respectful, non-judgmental language and to ask permission before discussing weight-related issues.

Shared decision-making: Health care professionals are encouraged to align care goals with a patient's values, recognizing health outcomes beyond just weight loss.

Evidence-based interventions: The guidelines support multicomponent strategies, such as role-play, self-reflection, and patient engagement, to reduce implicit and explicit bias effectively.

10:15am - 11:15am

HPV: An evolving cause of oropharyngeal cancer (B)

Jaime Turner grew up in Northwest Arkansas and graduated from Rogers High School. While in high school, she worked as a CNA as part of the Tri-City Youth Apprenticeship work study program. She continued working as a CNA through college, earning her undergraduate degree at the University of Arkansas in biology with a minor in psychology. She went on to Harding University for her Masters of Physician Assistant Studies. Jaime was interested learning more about otolaryngology after suffering from her own ENT problems. She arranged an elective clinical rotation in otolaryngology with Dr. Cashman and knew this was where she belonged. She's been practicing in otolaryngology with Dr. Cashman since graduating in 2014. Since then, she has received extensive additional training in head and neck procedures and diseases. Jaime enjoys teaching and has been honored to teach other PAs on the state and national level. Jaime enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband, daughter and pups. She has a huge garden and many house plants and loves trail running, mountain biking, backpacking and slalom skiing.

1.0 CE Credit

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is increasingly recognized as a major etiologic factor in oropharyngeal cancers, representing one of the fastest-growing cancer trends in the United States. While HPV's role in cervical and anogenital cancers is well established, its connection to malignancies of the tonsil, base of tongue, and other head and neck sites is often underappreciated in primary care and general practice settings.

This session will explore the evolving epidemiology of HPV-related head and neck cancers, their clinical presentation, diagnostic challenges, and implications for prevention and early detection. Emphasis will be placed on the unique characteristics of HPV-positive oropharyngeal squamous cell carcinoma (OPSCC), including differences in prognosis, patient demographics, and response to treatment.

Participants will gain insight into how PAs can play a critical role in patient education, vaccination advocacy, early recognition of symptoms, and interdisciplinary care coordination for affected patients.

Objectives:

1. Describe the epidemiologic trends and pathophysiology of HPV-related head and neck cancers.
2. Identify key clinical features and risk factors that distinguish HPV-positive from HPV-negative oropharyngeal cancers.
3. Discuss current diagnostic and staging approaches, including the role of p16 testing.
4. Review evidence-based strategies for prevention and early detection, including HPV vaccination and public health education.
5. Recognize the PA's role in counseling, screening, and managing patients with HPV-associated disease

11:15am - 11:30am

Networking and Sponsor Break

11:30am - 12:30pm

Packing Your Fears: Preparing for Global Health Missions (M)

Dr. Rob Gray is a 2016 graduate of the PA program at Nova Southeastern University in Jacksonville, Florida. He practices in urgent care, family medicine, and emergency medicine. He completed his Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) degree from the University of Lynchburg in 2022 with a concentration in Emergency Management and Global Health. Prior to entering medicine, he worked in several business careers, including operations management, project management, software design, and marketing. He earned an MBA from the University of Tennessee in 2011. Dr. Gray was a clinical preceptor, then a full-time assistant professor at NSU Jacksonville for four years, and has served as an adjunct instructor for the Lynchburg DMSc program since 2023. He also works as an instructor for PANCE and PANRE preparation for Blueprint Prep (formerly Rosh Review).

1.0 CE Credit

A common problem in the backpacking world is "packing your fears," which makes your pack too heavy to carry. While caring for patients in remote environments is rewarding, preparing for the voyage can be stressful. Uncertainty and anxiety can lead to over-packing and under-preparing for the journey, which can create even more stress!

Experienced global health PAs will share tips and tricks from global health missions to help travelers prepare more confidently to provide patient care around the world. From the earliest trip planning (visas and immunizations) to developing a packing list that best serves the traveling PA, the medical team, and their patients, we will cover the do's and don'ts of international medical travel. We will teach you how to research your destinations to prevent embarrassing customs drama (it's illegal to carry satellite devices in many countries!). This session will unpack a mindset that can be used for travel to climates around the world, and will share real-life examples of ways to efficiently prepare for the unknown without burdening the traveler with unnecessary (and heavy) extras. You will learn to pack your necessities, plan for some souvenirs to take home, and leave your fears behind!

Develop plans for global health logistics including patient care, personal needs, and space/weight limitations.

Research destinations for global health trips, focusing on local regulations, immunizations, and safety concerns.

Develop resources for the basic needs of individual travelers/teams, including water purification and recommended medications.

Create a packing list geared to conform to local cultural norms.

11:30am - 12:30pm

PANRE and the PANRE-LA (B)

Alicia Quella is the Director of Communications and PA Relations at the NCCPA. She has served as a PA Program Chair and Director and has practiced in emergency medicine and primary care. She has served as an epidemiologist and has published research on the PA workforce, global health and PA educational debt. Alicia earned her Masters of PA Studies degree and her doctoral degree in epidemiology from the University of Iowa.

1.0 CE Credit

NCCPA will provide detailed information on the recertification options for PAs- the PANRE and the PANRE-LA. We will give an update for PAs in the 2030 recertification cohort, review application deadlines and assessment options. We will also provide a review of the new Provider Bridge Program and the CAQ program (highlighting the new Occupational Medicine and Geriatric Medicine CAQs). In addition, we will describe the various ways PAs contribute to the work of NCCPA, grants available from the nccPA Health Foundation and other resources available to Arkansas PAs.

Learning Objectives:

Describe the options, resources and details on recertification for PAs: focusing on the PANRE and PANRE-LA

Describe the Provider Bridge Program, the CAQ program and the new CAQs (Geriatric Medicine) available for PAs.

Describe volunteer opportunities and PA grants available from the nccPA Health Foundation.

Update on recent legislation guiding PA Practice, the PA Licensure Compact and title change.

Describe the practice characteristics of Arkansas PAs.

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Sponsor Lunch

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Thyroid Cancer (M)

Manuel Heredia, MS, MS-N, APRN, AGACNP-BC Manuel Heredia is an Advanced Nurse Practitioner specializing in Adult-Gerontology Acute Critical Care and Nursing Education at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). With dual master's degrees in Kinesiology from the University of Central Arkansas and Nursing and Advance Nursing degrees from UAMS, as well as certification as an Athletic Trainer providing rehabilitation and training services for High schools in Little rock. He brings a unique multidisciplinary perspective to patient care and clinical teaching. Manuel's clinical work focuses on hematologic and endocrine malignancies, with substantial experience in the Head and Neck/Endocrinology Oncology Clinic at UAMS and current practice performing bone marrow biopsies at UAMS, Bone Marrow Clinic. His professional passion lies in empowering clinicians with practical, evidence-based tools to improve patient outcomes. His clinical interests focuses in endocrinology, cancer and metabolic disorders. In this lecture, Manuel offers useful, applicable guidance for primary care providers on the diagnosis and management of thyroid cancer-bridging specialty knowledge with evidence based guidelines and clinical practice to support timely, confident, and compassionate care.

1.0 CE Credit

As the thyroid gland has gained increased attention due to its relationship to metabolic function. A thorough evaluation could lead to the diagnosis of thyroid cancer. A lifetime risk of 1% of the population will be diagnosed with thyroid cancer in the USA. Thyroid hormone dysfunction does not correlate with thyroid cancer and early detection can be elusive. Specific steps can be taken to help health care providers diagnose this cancer.

Objectives:

Thyroid evaluation

Signs and symptoms of thyroid cancer

Radiological examination

Types of thyroid cancer

Cancer treatment and monitoring

1:30pm - 2:30pm

The Evolution of the Post Professional Doctoral Programs for PAs (B)

Jeremy M. Welsh, PhD, DHSc, DEL, JD, PA-C, DFAAPA Dr. Jeremy M. Welsh is a strategic leader with over two decades of experience in higher education and healthcare. Dr. Welsh is currently the Vice President and Associate Provost at the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education with a focus on program growth and integration. He has held past positions including Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer, and Chief Innovation Officer. His passion has often focused on launching innovative programs, including the first civilian DMSc degree. His leadership spans both academic operations and hospital APP utilization with a strong emphasis on community health partnerships. He is the former President/CEO of the Virginia Academy of PAs, where his tenure focused on expanding APP clinical scope of practice and removing statutory and regulatory barriers. Dr. Welsh combines his clinical background in emergency medicine and forensic medicine with expertise in institutional strategy and business operations. Jenna Rolfs, DMSc, MBA, PA-C, DFAAPA Dr. Jenna Rolfs is a nationally recognized leader in PA education with a deep commitment to advancing the PA profession through innovative, learner-centered training. She serves in senior academic leadership roles where she oversees the development, accreditation, and strategic growth of PA and graduate health sciences programs, ensuring academic rigor, sustainability, and alignment with workforce needs. Dr. Rolfs is passionate about preparing future and practicing PAs to excel as clinicians, educators, and leaders, with a strong emphasis on academic excellence, professional advocacy, and the evolving role of PAs within complex healthcare systems. Her work centers on cultivating leadership capacity, fostering interprofessional collaboration, and expanding pathways for PAs to influence education, policy, and healthcare delivery at local, national, and global levels.

1.0 CE Credit

The Physician Associate (PA) profession is currently navigating a significant educational evolution, characterized by the proliferation of PA-specific post-professional doctoral degree (PPDD) programs. This transformative period has ignited a critical dialogue regarding the future of PA education, including a growing interest in the potential transition to an entry-level doctoral degree (ELDD) as the standard for entry into the profession.

This presentation aims to provide a comprehensive and scholarly overview of this dynamic landscape. We will conduct a thorough review of current PPDD curricula, presenting a thematic analysis of trends across various programs. This analysis will illuminate the core competencies being cultivated at the doctoral level, offering valuable insights for both new and seasoned PA educators who are seeking advanced training and professional development. The session is specifically designed to equip educators with enhanced skills and strategic knowledge in key areas integral to the advancement of the profession, including healthcare administration, organizational leadership, advanced clinical practice, and research and scholarship.

A central objective of this presentation is to move beyond mere description and foster an evidence-informed dialogue concerning the feasibility and implications of an ELDD. We will critically examine the arguments for and against this transition, considering its potential impact on curriculum design, accreditation standards, student outcomes, and the profession's standing within the broader healthcare community.

2:30pm - 3:30pm

Rewriting the Narrative: The Evolution of Sleep Apnea Understanding (M)

Jaime Turner grew up in Northwest Arkansas and graduated from Rogers High School. While in high school, she worked as a CNA as part of the Tri-City Youth Apprenticeship work study program. She continued working as a CNA through college, earning her undergraduate degree at the University of Arkansas in biology with a minor in psychology. She went on to Harding University for her Masters of Physician Assistant Studies. Jaime was interested learning more about otolaryngology after suffering from her own ENT problems. She arranged an elective clinical rotation in otolaryngology with Dr. Cashman and knew this was where she belonged. She's been practicing in otolaryngology with Dr. Cashman since graduating in 2014. Since then, she has received extensive additional training in head and neck procedures and diseases. Jaime enjoys teaching and has been honored to teach other PAs on the state and national level. Jaime enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband, daughter and pups. She has a huge garden and many house plants and loves trail running, mountain biking, backpacking and slalom skiing.

1.0 CE Credit

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is a widespread yet underdiagnosed condition affecting an estimated 30 million adults in the United States. Despite its prevalence, many patients remain untreated—often because their initial presentation occurs outside of sleep medicine. From primary care and ENT to cardiology, endocrinology, and even psychiatry, every provider encounters patients exhibiting red flags for OSA.

This session emphasizes the critical role that all clinicians play in identifying sleep apnea and initiating timely diagnostic testing. We will review the broad clinical manifestations of OSA, explore its profound impact on systemic health—ranging from cardiovascular disease and metabolic dysfunction to cognitive decline and mood disorders—and discuss evidence-based screening tools that can be seamlessly integrated into any practice setting.

Through real-world case examples and interactive discussion, participants will leave equipped to recognize subtle presentations of sleep apnea, counsel patients on testing options, and understand when to refer for polysomnography or home sleep studies. Early identification not only improves sleep quality but can dramatically alter the trajectory of comorbid conditions, leading to better overall health outcomes.

1. Describe the systemic health consequences of untreated obstructive sleep apnea.
 2. Identify key symptoms and clinical clues that suggest undiagnosed OSA, even in non-sleep-specialty settings.
 3. Apply validated screening tools (e.g., STOP-BANG, Epworth Sleepiness Scale) in routine patient encounters.
 4. Determine appropriate next steps for evaluation and referral for diagnostic testing.
 5. Counsel patients on the importance of diagnosis and treatment adherence.
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2:30pm - 3:30pm

Breaking the Barrier: The PA's Role and Mental Health (B)

Tajuana has been a Board Certified PA for 23 years in various areas of medicine, including psychiatry. Recently, she has worked as a Clinical Quality Consultant, Behavioral Health Clinical Advisor, and BH Auditor for psychiatry providers serving primarily those age 65 and older. Tajuana completed her Doctor of Medical Science Degree in 2022 from Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions and subsequently earned her CAQ in Psychiatry. She has facilitated annual Mental Health Summits; presented at state and national PA events, including for AAPA's Women in Philanthropy members; and serves on the Board of Directors for Lawrence Technological University, TriUnity Health Board, and for the nccPA Health Foundation. She is currently an adjunct faculty member for Butler University's Doctoral PA Program. After residency, Kristin began her career at UC Health Yampa Valley Medical Center in Steamboat Springs, CO where she was involved in enhancing clinical pharmacy services in infectious disease, emergency medicine, and a variety of other multidisciplinary patient care areas. She joined the faculty at Colorado Mountain College teaching emergency pharmacology to EMTs, paramedics, RNs, and flight crews. She returned to Good Samaritan Medical Center to practice clinical pharmacy and precept PGY1 pharmacy residents with focus in emergency medicine, critical care and research. She then spent 5 years at St Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock, AR assisting with the development of a successful PGY-1 residency program and ED clinical pharmacy service line. She served as the ED clinical pharmacy team lead, supervisor of the Medication History Program, and primary preceptor for several clinical and research rotations. In 2022, she transitioned to the pharmaceutical industry and joined the medical affairs team at AstraZeneca as a medical science liaison with focus in acute care in the hospital setting. She recently transitioned to Vertex Pharmaceuticals as a Senior Medical Science Liaison with a focus in acute pain. When not working, Kristin enjoys traveling, outdoor sports and fitness, reading, live music and hanging out with family and friends.

1.0 CE Credit

Mental health is an essential element of overall health, and the impact of untreated or under-treated mental illness is vast and increasingly documented. Board Certified PAs have the broad, generalist knowledge; prescriptive authority; and commitment to continuous professional development to screen, manage, and when needed, coordinate and refer for patient mental health care and substance use disorder needs. PAs can adapt to fill the system gap created by growing demand for services coupled with limited access and insufficient workforce supply. By applying readily available screening tools and being resource-ready, PAs take a leadership role in championing integration of mental health across practice, ultimately improving health.

- "1. Recognize the importance of mental health as part of overall health.
2. Explain the role and contributions of PAs to screen, manage, and, when needed, coordinate and refer for mental health care.
3. Describe tools and resources to enhance PA readiness to provide mental health services and to support integration of mental health in practice.
4. Discuss current and emerging issues related to the health professions and mental health.

3:30pm - 4:30pm

PAs in Arkansas: Where Do We Go from Here? (M)

Aaron Woodall is the Immediate Past President of ARAPA. He is an Assistant Professor and the Associate Director of Didactic Education at the UAMS PA Program. He has a background in family medicine and sees patients both at Arcare and the UAMS 12th Street Health and Wellness Center. Aaron is a passionate advocate for PAs in Arkansas; he has been involved with the Legislative Committee since 2019 and helped champion numerous bills to advance the profession. He also represents Arkansas as a delegate to the AAPA House of Delegates. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his partner and their Sphynx cat, or going to the nearest concert.

1.0 CE Credit

The Arkansas Academy of PAs has accomplished several of its goals through legislative action over the last few years. Leaders of the organization were left to think: what's next? This talk will summarize the recent progress, as well as discuss using the results from a membership survey to guide the direction of ARAPA's future goals.

Objectives:

1. Describe the current PA practice environment in Arkansas.
2. Summarize recent legislative changes for PAs in Arkansas.
3. Discuss future legislative goals of the organization.
4. Understand the importance of advocacy in advancing the PA profession.

5:00pm - 5:30pm

Closing

6:30pm - 7:30pm

Social- Birdies and Brews

Open to attendees and plus one- please RSVP at registration of event or email CMEchair@arkansaspa.org

Saturday, March 14, 2026

8:00am - 8:30am

What PAs Should Know Regarding the Surgeon General's Advisory on Social Media Use in Children and Adolescents

Tarah Trokey, MS, PA-C, ATC, serves as an Assistant Professor in the Missouri State University (MSU) Physician Assistant Program and is a practicing PA at Magers Student Health and Wellness Center in Springfield, Missouri. With a professional foundation in sports medicine—supported by her master's degree in Sports Medicine and Athletic Training—Tarah brings nine years of clinical experience across Primary Care, Urgent Care, and Sports Medicine. Her career has taken her from the Pacific Northwest to the Midwest, with five years of practice in Oregon and Washington before returning to Missouri. She is passionate about movement based medicine, teaching future PAs, and advancing clinical practice through cutting edge education.

0.5 CE Credits

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In 2023, the U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory highlighting concerns of social media use's effects on the mental health of children and adolescents.

Despite this advisory, social media use among youth in the United States continues to climb, while mental health remains a significant portion of disease burden in this age group. Excessive social media use has

been linked to increased rates of depression, anxiety, body dysmorphia, disordered eating, and suicide. We will briefly review the neurophysiology that occurs in the reward center of the brain when overstimulated with social media use, triggering pathways similar to those activated in substance use

and gambling. The purpose of this 30-minute review is to remind

PAs and medical providers of the concerns outlined in the advisory, as well as provide actionable recommendations

for clinical practice. The goal is to simplify the science behind why chronic social media use can be harmful to our patients and how to tangibly provide lifestyle modifications for a thriving younger generation and beyond. The commentary of this topic was published in JAAPA January 2026 issue.

8:30am - 9:15am

Sponsor Breakfast and Networking Break

9:15am - 10:15am

Surviving the Wild: Essential Wilderness Medicine Skills for Extreme Environments (M)

Dr. Rob Gray is a 2016 graduate of the PA program at Nova Southeastern University in Jacksonville, Florida. He practices in urgent care, family medicine, and emergency medicine. He completed his Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) degree from the University of Lynchburg in 2022 with a concentration in Emergency Management and Global Health. Prior to entering medicine, he worked in several business careers, including operations management, project management, software design, and marketing. He earned an MBA from the University of Tennessee in 2011. Dr. Gray was a clinical preceptor, then a full-time assistant professor at NSU Jacksonville for four years, and has served as an adjunct instructor for the Lynchburg DMSc program since 2023. He also works as an instructor for PANCE and PANRE preparation for Blueprint Prep (formerly Rosh Review).

1.0 CE Credit

Extreme medicine isn't just for mountains, jungles, or combat zones. The principles that guide care in the wild such as resourcefulness, adaptability, and decisive leadership are just as relevant in urban ERs, rural clinics, disaster zones, and global missions. This session bridges the gap between extreme environments and everyday practice, empowering PAs with decision-making tools that translate across every setting. Whether you're in a remote village, an underserved community, or a chaotic trauma bay, this session shows how extreme medicine principles can elevate your clinical care and leadership when conditions are anything but ideal.

Objectives:

- Explore key principles and scope of wilderness medicine in various settings, including expedition, recreation, combat, and disaster scenarios. -
- Identify and manage common medical emergencies encountered in wilderness environments, utilizing appropriate field treatment techniques. -
- Develop skills in planning and executing medical evacuations in remote and resource-limited settings.

9:15am - 10:15am

Achieving Quality Healthcare for Non-Insured and Spanish-Speaking Populations (B)

Annelise Gonzalez, originally from Fort Collins, CO, attended the University of Arkansas and later graduated from the Harding University PA Program in 2021. She recently entered her 5th year of practice in Primary Care, and now works in a private clinic setting seeing a large population of Spanish-speaking patients. She and her husband live in Rogers, traveling as often as they can while also enjoying the food and culture of NWA.

1.0 CE Credit

Northwest Arkansas has a richly diverse population, with 38% of Springdale registered as Hispanic/Latino and 42% of Rogers students living in a Spanish-speaking household (AR Money & Politics magazine, 2020). While not specific to NWA, a 2023 study estimated that only 2% of the healthcare workforce in the state of Arkansas consists of Spanish-speaking professionals. On a broader scale, there is a tremendous disparity in the United States between the growing Spanish-speaking population and their access to Spanish-speaking medical teams.

As a bilingual Physician Assistant leading a cash-pay, private clinic in Lowell, AR, my practice has evolved to primarily serve Spanish-speaking patients who do not hold health insurance. I would like to present an update on the diversity of healthcare needs in NWA (also applicable on a broader scale), with special attention to providing high-quality and gold-standard healthcare to patients who lack health insurance.

10:15am - 11:15am

Addressing Opioid Use Disorder in Primary Care (M)

Dr Kristin Martin is a board-certified physician practicing addiction medicine, family practice, and emergency medicine for over 15 years. She has a deep commitment to serving rural and underserved populations, currently providing care across all levels of treatment, including outpatient services, residential treatment programs, and emergency departments. Dr. Martin has particular expertise in mobile health delivery, rural medicine, and justice-involved care, offering a comprehensive, lifespan approach to substance use disorder treatment. Her technical assistance work is grounded in hands-on clinical experience and a strong dedication to expanding access to evidence-based, compassionate care for individuals and communities affected by the opioid crisis.

1.0 CE Credit

Review best practices in screening patients for OUD in primary care settings

Explain how to initiate and manage medications for OUD (MOUD)

Outline clinician best practices to promote patient engagement and adherence when addressing OUD in patients

10:15am - 11:15am

A Window to the Soul - Transformations through Eyelid Surgery (B)

Ellie Baker, PA-C, is a Surgical Physician Assistant at Natural State Aesthetics, where she has served since February 2024. She specializes in oculofacial plastic surgery, a highly advanced and precise field focused on the functional and aesthetic care of the eyes and face. Ellie earned her Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science from the University of Arkansas in 2020 and went on to complete her Master of Physician Assistant Studies at Harding University in 2023. Her training and clinical experience have equipped her with a deep understanding of facial anatomy, surgical technique, and patient-centered aesthetic care.

1.0 CE Credit

This presentation will focus on common skin cancers affecting the eyelids and surrounding areas. I will include an overview of mohs reconstruction techniques and the importance of early detection. Emphasis will be placed on a PA's role in patient education and timely referrals. Additionally, the session will cover functional eyelid surgeries, including blepharoplasty and ptosis repair, with discussion of clinical indications and criteria for medical necessity. Practical examples and visuals will be used to illustrate key anatomical considerations and guide appropriate referral decisions.

11:15am - 11:30am

Networking Break

11:30am - 12:30pm

Antibiotic Stewardship (M)

Ryan Dare, M.D., joined the Infectious Diseases Division in July 2016. He and his wife, Dr. Shannon Dare (Anesthesia), are originally from Arkansas and both attended UAMS for medical school. He completed an Internal Medicine residency in 2014 and an Infectious Diseases fellowship in 2016, both at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Dr. Shannon Dare also joined as faculty in the department of Anesthesia here at UAMS in July 2016.

1.0 CE Credit

Antibiotic Stewardship is a coordinated effort to improve the use of antibiotics by promoting the right drug, at the right dose, for the right duration. The goal is to enhance patient care, reduce antimicrobial resistance, and preserve the effectiveness of antibiotics for future generations.

11:30am - 12:30pm

Low T, High Stakes: What Every Provider Should Know About Hypogonadism (B)

Allen Childers, PA-C, is a Physician Assistant at Arkansas Urology with eight years of experience providing compassionate, patient-centered urologic care. Driven by a lifelong love of science, he is committed to educating and empowering patients so they feel informed, confident, and supported in their health journey. Allen earned a bachelor's degree in Biology from Southern Arkansas University (2011) and a bachelor's in Cardio-Pulmonary Science from UAMS (2013). He began his healthcare career as a Registered Respiratory Therapist in the NICU at Arkansas Children's Hospital before completing his Master of Physician Assistant Studies in 2017. A six-week elective rotation at Arkansas Urology sparked his passion for urology's blend of medicine and surgery and ultimately led him to the specialty he loves. He currently serves as the Southeast Director at Large for the Arkansas Academy of Physician Assistants and is a member of the AAPA and the American Urological Association. Outside the clinic, Allen enjoys reading, hunting, fishing, traveling, and cheering on the Arkansas Razorbacks. He and his wife, Taylor, live in El Dorado with their two children, CC and Shep, along with their golden retriever, Winnie, and their spirited cat, Rico.

1.0 CE Credit

Hypogonadism is a common condition that affects men, particularly as they age, yet it remains under diagnosed and under treated. The symptoms of testosterone deficiency can have a profound impact on overall health, mood, energy, and quality of life. In this session, we'll explore how to recognize hypogonadism in clinical practice, interpret relevant laboratory findings, and implement effective, evidence-based treatment strategies. As providers, it's essential that we understand how to identify and manage this condition to help improve our patients' well-being and long-term outcomes.

11:30am - 12:30pm

PANCE at a Glance (S)

Cynthia F. Griffith, M.P.A.S., PA-C, is the PA Outreach Specialist for NCCPA. In that role, Cynthia works with PA programs across the country demystifying PANCE and helping students feel less anxiety about this career milestone. She is also a clinically practicing PA. She specializes in treating skin disease in patients who are immunosuppressed after solid organ or bone marrow transplant. Cynthia is also the Editor in Chief for the Journal of Dermatology Physician Assistants.

The presentation covers:

- The PANCE blueprint
- Scheduling the exam
- The Pearson VUE testing experience
- Career tools offered by NCCPA

12:30pm - 1:30pm

Sponsored Challenge Bowl

1:30pm - 2:30pm

The Ortho Surgical Threshold: Knowing When to Refer and When to Reassure (M)

Dr. Parham is an Arkansas native and fellowship-trained orthopaedic surgeon specializing in foot and ankle conditions. He earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry from Colorado College before attending the UAMS College of Medicine where he was inducted into the prestigious Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) society and graduated with an Honors in Research. Dr. Parham completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at UAMS, earning the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) Resident Scholar Award and the UAMS Orthopaedics 2023 Resident Educator of the Year award. He further advanced his training with a fellowship at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City under the tutelage of Dr. Charles Saltzman and his partners. Dr. Parham provides a patient-centered approach for treating arthritic conditions, sports injuries, fractures and deformities. He utilizes cutting-edge surgical techniques, including minimally invasive procedures and total ankle replacements. He is a member of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, Arkansas Orthopaedic Society and the American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society. He sees patients at the UAMS Health Orthopaedic Clinic on Shackelford Road in Little Rock, the UAMS Health Orthopaedic & Spine Clinic in North Little Rock and the UAMS Orthopaedic & Spine Hospital, as well as at the John L. McClellan Memorial Veterans' Hospital. 1.0 CE Credit

In the fast-paced primary care environment, musculoskeletal complaints are a leading cause of patient visits. This session provides a systematic framework for the orthopedic evaluation, focusing on high-yield physical exam maneuvers and the "red flag" indicators that necessitate a specialist referral. By clarifying the "surgical threshold," this talk empowers clinicians to confidently manage conservative cases in-house while ensuring timely, high-quality transitions of care for patients requiring operative repair.

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Shock and Awww: Understanding Seizure Disorders in the Young and Restless (B)

I attended Ouachita Baptist University, graduating in 2022 with a B.S in Biology and Chemistry. After graduating, I attended the UAMS PA program, graduating in 2024 earning my MPAS. I then started working at Arkansas Children's Hospital in hospital medicine. I have the joy of rotating between the inpatient general pediatric team, the gastroenterology team, the nephrology team, the pulmonology team, and the neurology team. These teams have allowed me to see many different areas of pediatric medicine and feel well comfortable caring for complex diseases. When I am not working, I love to play piano, watch reality TV, or attend musicals with my wife of 4 years, Aubree. 1.0 CE Credit

It is very important for healthcare providers to recognize the unique presentation of seizure disorders in children. Understanding early warning signs and different seizure types can significantly improve clinical outcomes of pediatric patients. Providers should aim to recognize these symptoms, and know when to intervene or refer to pediatric neurology providers.

1:30pm - 2:30pm

Mercy Springfield- APP (S)

2:30pm - 3:30pm

PA Panel (50 Years of PAs)

Anne Brown, PA-C is a Physician Assistant at Baptist Health Family Clinic - West in Little Rock. Anne grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and completed her undergraduate training at The College of Wooster in Wooster, OH. After college, she moved to Arkansas to work with a nonprofit teaching organization called Teach for America. During her time as a teacher in rural Arkansas, she saw a great need for improving access to medical care, particularly primary care, across the state. She went on to earn her Master's in Physician Assistant Studies at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) in 2017 and then began her career in Family Medicine at Baptist Health Family Clinic in Cabot. She transferred to the West location in 2020 and has been serving patients in Little Rock and the surrounding area ever since. Anne is also an adjunct faculty member for the UAMS Physician Assistant program, where she delivers several didactic lectures each year, and serves as a Clinical Preceptor. She was the President of The Arkansas Academy of Physician Assistants (ARAPA) in 2022, and has held several other volunteer positions with ARAPA over the last 5 years. When she isn't in the clinic, Anne enjoys spending time with her husband, Jared, along with their two children (Ainsley and Shepherd), and their two cats. Tim Irizarry is a Physician Assistant specializing in Family Medicine with broad experience spanning primary care, emergency medicine, and urology. He is currently lead primary care provider at DePaul Community Health Centers of Arkansas in Dumas and Gould, where he manages acute and chronic conditions across the lifespan. Tim earned his Physician Assistant degree from Harding University and holds a BA in Psychology with an emphasis in Physiology from the University of Arkansas. He also completed formal training as a Paramedic, bringing decades of frontline emergency and prehospital care experience to his clinical practice. He has also served as a Deputy Coroner in Pulaski County and serves currently in Desha County. His professional background includes work in community health centers, hospital-based care, urology, and emergency medical services. He has served as Regional Director of Physician Assistant Education for A.T. Still University at DePaul Community Healthcare Centers of New Orleans in clinical rotations and is a past president of the Urological Association of Physician Assistants and past member of the Arkansas State Medical Board PA Review Committee. His clinical interests include primary care, men's health, low testosterone, hospice/palliative care, and emergency medicine. Tim is a Fellow of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and remains active in advancing PA education, mentorship, and high-quality patient-centered care. He currently resides in Dumas with his wife. They have three daughters who live in Northwest and Central Arkansas. Josh Matthews completed a Master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies from the University of Oklahoma Health Science Center in Oklahoma City in 2000. He then practiced internal medicine at the Kickapoo Tribal Health Center, a rural tribal Native American health facility, while working adjunct at local urgent care facilities, emergency departments, and a Native American Hospital in Ada, Oklahoma. He joined Stillwater Skin, Cancer and Medical clinic in 2005 where he began his career in dermatology. He spent four years there before being blessed with the opportunity to move to Northwest Arkansas! There he began his career at Ozark Dermatology Clinic and has been there since 2009. He currently resides in Fayetteville but spent the majority of his time here in Northwest Arkansas in Farmington where his kids attended school. Katie Moore is a Hospitalist Physician Associate at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock. She is a recent graduate from UAMS's PA Program in the Class of 2024, where she served as Class Secretary and graduated with Honors. She's an alumni of UCA with a degree in Biology. In her spare time, she loves to spend time with her husband and 3 corgis. She is also an avid performer who owns character entertainment company Happily Ever After Entertainment, providing character entertainment for Arkansas Children's Hospital. Sara Vann, PA-C currently practices at Arkansas Children's Northwest, in Springdale, Arkansas. She primarily works in Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery but is also a member of the Surgical Hospitalist Team. This team provides care to patients in multiple surgical subspecialties including Pediatric Orthopedic Surgery, Pediatric General Surgery and Pediatric Otolaryngology. A native of the Philadelphia area, Ms. Vann earned her Master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Thomas Jefferson University (formerly Philadelphia University). She has been board certified by the NCCPA since 2009. Ms. Vann has previously practiced in Neurosurgery and Stroke Neurology in Fayetteville, Arkansas, as well as both Sports Orthopedics and Primary Care Pediatrics in Fairbanks, Alaska. Prior to becoming a PA, Ms. Vann began her healthcare career in sports medicine, as a certified athletic trainer (ATC). She has provided care to the athletes at Rutgers University, Johns Hopkins University, and to the cadets and athletes at the United States Military Academy Preparatory School. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time on the family farm, growing flowers, and exploring her adopted home state of Arkansas. Valerie Whitson is a NCCPA-certified PA that has been in practice for 15 years. She graduated from the University of Arkansas with a degree in Exercise Science in 2006 and then attended PA school at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, graduating in 2010. She worked in family medicine at a federally-qualified health center in Hawaii and then later in adult internal medicine in Denver, CO, prior to moving back to Fayetteville in 2017 to start her current position. She is employed by UAMS and provides primary care to the University of Arkansas athletes from her clinic in Razorback Stadium. She enjoys working with pre-PA and certified athletic trainer students, regularly helping with class lectures, internships, and student shadowing.

1.0 CE Credit

The purpose of this panel is to have a discussion with PAs who have been in practice for varying lengths of time and discuss their personal evolution as PA's as well as how the evolution of the physician assistant profession. We will highlight professional wins, changes, and big moments that have shaped these individuals' careers.

3:30pm - 3:45pm

Closing

1.0 CE Credit