



T A P A
 TENNESSEE ACADEMY OF
 PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

PA Pulse

The heartbeat of TAPA

Bridging the Future of Healthcare

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From the President

Since January, TAPA leadership and staff have put in countless hours advocating for changes to laws and rules that govern PA practice. Many of us are looking at national trends and see how PA practice is falling behind in the two dozen states where nurse practitioners have independent practice, and we are deeply concerned about the future of our profession. If you aren't worried about the stability of your career, then you aren't paying attention to what is happening across the country and what is knocking on the door of Tennessee.

Our profession is at a crossroads - and if we want to continue to remain relevant and competitive providers within the healthcare arena, we must work together to advocate to modernize PA practice.

To achieve this goal, TAPA filed legislation this year that would have changed how PAs practice in our state. Most importantly, it removed the tie between a PA's license and one single physician's license as a condition to practice. Our proposed bill would have allowed more flexibility of how PAs were utilized by their employers, including hospital systems and physician-owned practices, and it would have removed some of the barriers that keep PAs from going into underserved areas. It would have allowed the individual PA's scope of practice to be determined by their own training and experience and not be dependent upon a physician's scope of practice, and it would have allowed collaboration and oversight requirements to be determined at the practice level.

TAPA had some very productive conversations with the lobbyists representing the physician groups, and we were very close to getting an agreement with them on our amendment. At the same time these discussions were happening, the nurses were pursuing their Full Practice Authority bill which the physician groups strongly opposed.

In our meetings with key senators, we found out that there is a core group of legislators who are committed to making changes to how PAs and APRNs practice in our state. These legislators see what is happening across the country, and they know that changes to state law to allow more autonomy for PAs and APRNs is inevitable. Furthermore, they know that such changes will benefit many Tennesseans who need better access to healthcare.

When the nurses' bill came up for a vote in the Senate Commerce Committee, they voted to send the bill to a summer task force. Subsequent

See President, page 2

Mission - TAPA's mission is to promote accessible, quality healthcare, and to advance the education, profession and practice of physician assistants in Tennessee.

Vision

Protecting and empowering the practice of physician assistants in Tennessee.

President, continued from page 1

conversations between our Senate sponsor and Lt. Gov. Randy McNally revealed that the lieutenant governor wanted our bill to also go to this task force. So, when our bill came up in Senate Health, it was referred to the task force.

It is really important for rank-and-file PAs to hear what legislators are saying about PA practice. I hope you will take a few minutes to view the recordings from the Senate Commerce and Health committees as they discussed our bill and the nurses' bill. The recordings are on the main General Assembly website at capitol.tn.gov, or you can click on the links below to get to those recordings directly. You don't have to watch the entire recording; you can click on the bill numbers to fast forward to that specific discussion.

[Senate Commerce and Labor Committee Meeting – March 15, 2022](#) (when you open the link, scroll through the Senate bills listed below the video and click on SB0176)

[Senate Health and Welfare Committee Meeting – March 23, 2022](#) (When you open the link, scroll through the Senate bills listed below the video and click on SB2775)

I am optimistic that our work over the summer will result in legislation that will make much-needed changes to the PA Practice Act in this state. And I am confident that such a bill will pass next year. But we will need the help of each and every PA in this state to see that happen. Please continue to reach out to your legislators throughout this spring and summer and advocate for our profession.

Greg Cain, PA-C
TAPA President

PA Day on the Hill Recap

On Wednesday, Feb. 23, 250 PAs and students came to Nashville to participate in TAPA's annual PA Day on the Hill. It was the largest crowd participating thus far, and attendees really made an impact on legislators!

The day began with a legislative briefing where PAs and students learned about TAPA's optimal team practice (OTP) bill as well as other bills pending in the Legislature that could affect PA practice in Tennessee. Following the briefing, the group traveled to the legislative offices in the Cordell Hull Building for their appointments with legislators.



Throughout the day, PAs and students met with more than 70 different legislators. This was a great opportunity to raise awareness of the PA profession with state decision makers and educate them about the need to modernize Tennessee's PA Practice Act.

TAPA appreciates everyone who participated in this year's Day on the Hill. If you weren't able to join us this year, we hope to see you in 2023. Be sure to turn to page 5 for additional photos from this great day.

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TAPA Gets Ready for Spring Fling

By Mallory Briggs, TAPA Special Event and Conference Coordinator

TAPA is looking forward to Spring Fling 2022, and we hope you are making plans to join us in April. We know that many PAs are looking forward to resuming pre-pandemic activities, including gathering in person for TAPA's annual spring conference for medical education, networking, and fellowship, and TAPA looks forward to welcoming everyone back.

Scheduled for April 8-9, 2022, Spring Fling is sure to be another great conference. TAPA is excited to be bringing this conference back to Nashville this year, to the recently renovated Hilton Nashville Airport. We hope you will join us for two days of quality medical education, which is being planned to offer 22 credits of continuing medical education (CME).

TAPA also has a new way of providing more free time with the same amount of CME. To give attendees the time to enjoy Nashville, the agenda will end early afternoon on Saturday and TAPA will be offering several prerecorded lectures that attendees can view at their leisure.

The Hilton is within a five-minute drive of Opry Mills, the Grand Old Opry, and the Opryland Hotel and Resort, and about a 10-minute drive to downtown. This prime location allows conference attendees to take advantage of the many sights and sounds of Nashville during their free time. Get tickets to see the Grand Ole Opry in person either Friday or Saturday night and see your favorite musicians perform live. If you enjoy shopping, Opry Mills has more than 200 outlet stores offering your favorite brands. And if you want to catch some live music in Nashville's downtown honky-tonks or dine at award-winning restaurants, Broadway is a quick 10-minute Uber/Lyft ride from the hotel.

Nashville has a few new and exciting things to offer. For example, the Van Gogh immersive experience also coincides with our Spring conference if you are interested in a unique and completely new way to view art. Since the last time we were in Nashville, the city has secured its spot as a music mecca with the opening of the National Museum of African American Music. Last year, Fifth + Broadway, a 6-acre complex of towers and shops opened up downtown with a whole new slew of places to eat, shop and browse, including an open-air food hall.

TAPA conferences offer unique opportunities to network face-to-face with fellow PAs. These personal connections are priceless to PAs, their patients and their practices as they can lead to new job opportunities, patient referrals and professional collaboration. If you can't join us at Spring Fling, make plans to attend FallFest, Oct. 3-7, 2022. We hope to see you soon!

Spring Fling Sponsors and Exhibitors

TAPA would like to recognize its Spring Fling 2022 sponsors and exhibitors. Their support helps TAPA provide quality conferences to PAs and students. If their reps visit your practice, please thank them for their support!

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PA Day on the Hill

Feb. 23 was a great day of networking, advocacy and fellowship between PAs and students. Thank you to everyone who participated this year!



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Cory Davidson, PA-C
Metabolic Disease Associates

*Tennessee Academy of Physician Assistants
Spring Fling Conference*

Friday, April 8, 2022 at 12:30pm CT

Hilton Nashville Airport

2200 Elm Hill Pike, # 301 Nashville, TN 37214

Register by 04/06/22

You may register for this program by calling or texting your UltraCare Liason:

**Tammy McArthur at 415-720-3153 or
TMcArthur@ultragenyx.com**

All participants that choose to attend this in-person event must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. If you are not fully vaccinated, please reach out to your Ultragenyx representative to learn about other program opportunities that may be available.



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As of 3/31/2022

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contributing \$250+

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*Monthly contributors

Struggling?



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TAPA Awards

TAPA is accepting nominations for the follow awards:

- **PA of the Year**
- **PA Student of the Year**
- **Preceptor of the Year**
- **Educator of the Year**
- **PA/Physician Team of the Year**

Nominations can be submitted by PAs, PA students, faculty and supervising physicians. The nomination deadline is **July 31, 2022**. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the TAPA website at www.tnpa.com.