



Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists

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PANA Installs CRNA as First-Ever Director to Newly Formed Government Relations Post

***Position will give association constant presence among stakeholders
dealing with issues related to anesthesia care, health costs in Pa.***

HARRISBURG (Jan. 31, 2020) --- The Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists (PANA), which represents more than 3,700 certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) and students across the state, has named Jessica Poole to serve as the association's first-ever director in a newly formed post focused on government relations in Pennsylvania.

Poole, DNAP, MHS, CRNA, will begin her role as Government Relations Director on Feb. 1. She currently serves as PANA Vice President and heads PANA's State Governance Relations Committee. She will resign her Vice President post to take on this new contracted position, which incorporates state governance and focuses on engaging lawmakers and association members on issues important to CRNAs.

"This is a tremendous honor," said Poole, of Unity Township, Westmoreland County. "Our association leadership should be commended for taking this new direction. Creating this position shows just how serious PANA is about enhancing the practice of anesthesia in Pennsylvania, and how committed we are to providing safe, cost-effective care for every Pennsylvanian."

Unlike other PANA leadership positions and committee chairmanships, the Government Relations Director is a contracted post designed to be long term to provide a more stable, consistent point of contact for CRNAs, policy-makers, health-care professionals and other stakeholders.

"Jess has already proven her credentials over nearly two years while running PANA's State Governance Relations Committee," PANA President Angelarosa G. DiDonato, DNP, CRNA, said. "She'll be able to hit the ground running. And that's exactly what we need her to do so we can quickly advance the policies that are so important to CRNAs and the people we serve every day."

Among her duties, Poole will be a primary point of contact for lawmakers and other health-care trade associations and organizations, helping to inform stakeholders about issues related to

CRNA practice in Pennsylvania. She also will serve as a liaison to the board, keeping them apprised of priority and emerging policy issues.

Her work won't center simply on the Capitol complexes in Harrisburg or Washington. Poole will travel the state to attend planned meetings, events and forums with association members, lawmakers and other partners. The effort will help residents learn more about CRNAs and the work they do to keep patients safe and reduce the cost of health care.

Besides her work with PANA, Poole also has held committee posts with the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists. She currently works with BPW Medical Associates PC, a private practice serving southwestern Pennsylvania.

CRNAs are the hands-on providers of anesthesia care, operating safely in every setting where anesthesia is administered, including hospital operating and delivery rooms; ambulatory surgical centers; the offices of dentists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists, and plastic surgeons; pain management centers and more.

CRNAs are the main providers of anesthesia care in rural communities and medically underserved areas, delivering essential health care and preventing gaps in services. CRNAs also are battle-tested, serving on the front lines since World War I as the main providers of anesthesia care to U.S. military personnel in austere combat theaters.

Despite these advancements, Pennsylvania remains one of only two states (New York is the other) that fails to recognize CRNA designation in some form. There is no formal definition for "certified registered nurse anesthetist" under the state's Professional Nursing Law, meaning they are recognized only as registered nurses (RNs), not CRNAs. Professional designation legislation (S.B. 325) passed the Senate last session but has not yet been taken up by the House.

For more information about PANA, visit www.PANA.org. For details about key policy issues, visit www.PANAforQualityCare.com or follow along on social media via Twitter at [@PANACRNA](https://twitter.com/PANACRNA) or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/PANACRNA.

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