



Plant a Seed

Newsletter for members of the American Cannabis Nurses Association
Incorporated in 2010

February 2019

President's Message

Carey Clark
PhD, RN, AHN-BC, RYT

Martin Luther King reminded us that, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?"

As an "all-volunteer" non-profit nursing organization, the American Cannabis Nurses Association relies on the service of our members to ensure that the organization accomplishes its mission: To advance excellence in cannabis nursing practice through advocacy, collaboration, education, research, and policy development. From offering educational CEs to our members to creating a stronger social media presence, and further to the planning of ACNA's inaugural cannabis nursing conference for nurses scheduled for December 2019, it takes the skills of leadership and the heart of service to help our organization grow in numbers, presence, and effectiveness.

I recently had the opportunity to reflect upon my own areas of service and advocacy and I am humbled by all that ACNA is accomplishing. We are still a young nursing organization, and despite the ongoing issues of stigma and Federal I scheduling related to cannabis, we continue to make headway toward the recognition of cannabis nursing as a legitimate specialty within the field of nursing. The National Council of States Board of Nursing (2018) publication, "*The Nursing Care of Patients Using Medical Marijuana*" (<https://www.ncsbn.org/marijuana-guidelines.htm>), has helped our cause by calling for all nurses and nursing students (from pre-licensure to APRN) to be educated about the endocannabinoid system, how cannabis works in the body, their own state's medical cannabis programs, ethical and legal concerns, and the



nurse's role in caring for medical cannabis patients.

This NCSBN report solidifies the idea that we are ethically obligated to share our cannabis-as-medicine related knowledge, skills, and experiences with other nurses to support all nurses' knowledge base as well as patient autonomy and beneficence. This act of sharing knowledge is another form of service that we can perform on a regular basis in our daily lives, while always keeping in mind that cannabis helps to alleviate suffering and enhances health through supporting homeostasis. We can likewise focus on the need for coaching cannabis patients toward whole health through lifestyle-based holistic modalities that support upregulation of the endocannabinoid system.

Nurses benefit when we provide service to other. As the great philosopher Siddhartha Gautama (The Buddha) stated, "If you light a lamp for someone else, it will also brighten your path." Let's continue to spread the light of cannabis in the service that we perform within the communities we engage. Thank you for your service and your commitment to the health of the patients and populations we serve.

Member Spotlight

Name: Frankie Soska

State you are in: Florida

Nursing Background: Graduated with my ADN in May 2018, received my licensure in June 2018, and am currently finishing up my BSN.

What do you currently do in the Cannabis Space? Currently, I manage nine physicians, of varying specialties, with a total of 3,500 patients which is climbing weekly. I provide education, guidance, and cooking classes for all my patients, and I bridge two gaps; one between Dispensary/Pharmaceutical Representatives and my physicians, and the other between the physicians I work with and their patients regarding cannabis-exclusive disease process therapy. I also host quarterly educational seminars for all my patients in coordination with pharmaceutical representatives, I frequent local dispensaries to ensure their staff is properly educated on basic cannabis knowledge, I provide oversight to education they provide patients, and I help them provide said education without entering into the realm of medical advice.

Frankie's Story: In 2012 while serving in the USAF in California, I was diagnosed with small and large intestine fistulating Crohn's disease. I began the medical retirement process along with therapy. I started on Remicade infusions coupled with Mercaptopurine (6MP), neither of these really worked, so Remicade was replaced with Humira auto injections every two weeks while still on the 6MP. I was slowly wasting away, looked like death, was always ill, and my hair was falling out. A civilian friend was over one day while I was in the process of retirement and offered me some cannabis, explaining all the benefits and research regarding its anti-inflammatory processes and assistance with pain. At this point in my disease process my Gastrologist was going to resort to a colostomy, and I was terrified of this at the age of 33, so I thought why not give marijuana a chance. I smoked half a joint with my friend and didn't experience any symptoms for two weeks, at which point my eyes were opened. I began doing as much research and reading as many books about cannabis as possible to educate myself on this wonderful plant that genuinely saved my life. After my military retirement I continued to self-medicate and learn as much as possible. With the aid of cannabis, I had more energy to work, so instead of just being retired I



decided to go back to school to become an RN. I was an incredible advocate for medical marijuana and was shown ACNA's website by a fellow student. It was like a dream come true, so I immediately began all the core curricula alongside my classes for my RN. It took cannabis to open my eyes to its miraculous benefits, so if anything, I suppose, cannabis itself got me involved with it. I have been in complete remission since beginning cannabis therapy, and all my GI doctors are amazed.

Do you have any Words of Wisdom to other members who want to get more involved? Do not be afraid to be different. All through schooling, I was ridiculed for wanting to be a Cannabis Nurse, and now my professors with their MSN give me resumes. There are so many avenues one can take with cannabis nursing, and the sky/imagination is really the limit. From hospice to cooking classes, education is the key, and when you think you have it all, you've only just begun, never stop learning about cannabis as more and more research comes to light. We are on the forefront of a new era of homeopathic plant-based medicines. Be an innovator, a pioneer, and ride the lighting.

What Does ACNA Membership Mean to You? We all know each nursing specialty has their own groups, hospital floors, educational CEUs, etc., but those of us interested in ethnopharmacology and plant-based medicines really have nowhere to call our own, as if we're an outcast/sideshow at the circus of normal nursing subspecialties. ACNA provides a place where those of us with like minds can feel at home, safe, and amongst friends. ACNA membership also provides me with research information, access to healthcare professionals that have been doing this much longer than I, and a network of like-minded individuals.

Committee Chair Updates

**Membership Committee – Llewellyn Smith,
Chair**

The ACNA Membership committee 2017-2018

was responsible for the development and implementation of ACNA Webinars, the Ambassador Membership Drive, and Meet-Up Revisions and Restructuring. These three initiatives are foundational for our organizational success and ACNA's future development. These member benefits are particularly valuable to our nurses during the confounding changing tide of cannabis therapeutics nationally. During the membership committee's volunteer service 2017-2018, ACNA membership participation grew from about 600 members to over 1100 as a direct result of committee efforts. We are very proud of the team's accomplishments. It has been a pleasure and an honor to chair the Membership Committee for the past two years. However, it is time to pursue other ACNA goals and provide a fresh start for the Membership Committee. Therefore, I will be relinquishing the role of Membership Committee Chair. It is with great pleasure to introduce members to our new Membership Committee Chair, Eloise Theisen, ACNA President-elect! The Membership



Committee will continue to improve membership benefits while enhancing member engagement. Thank you to each member who submitted committee volunteer applications and completed the vetting process. ACNA appreciates your willingness to serve our mission to advocate, educate, research, and develop policy. As ACNA committees develop, volunteers will be contacted by their respective Chairs. Please join me in welcoming Eloise Theisen as ACNA Membership Committee Chair 2019-2020.

Credentialing Committee – Llewellyn Smith, Chair

One of the most valuable membership benefits ACNA can provide is recognition as a nursing specialty organization. ACNA leadership has created a Credentialing Committee to lead this process and I will be shifting my responsibilities to chair this committee. The American Nurses Association (ANA) will be mentoring ACNA through the process of application to be recognized as a nursing specialty over the next 12-24 months. Our current President, Dr. Carey Clark, in conjunction with the Research and Education Committee 2017-2018, created the Scope and Standards of Practice for Cannabis Nursing. Final revisions and approvals for this

is approval by our ACNA Board of Directors. Following ACNA BOD approval, the S/S will be released to the public for review and suggestions. Once public revisions are reviewed and incorporated, the S/S will be submitted with appropriate application to the American Nurses Association in hopes of attaining cannabis nursing as a specialty recognition. Other members of the Credentialing Committee include ACNA BOD member Nancy Quigley, ACNA members Teri Polley-Michea from California, and Jessilyn Dolan from Vermont. I'd like to convey a heartfelt thank you to ACNA leadership for the opportunity to serve on this essential ad hoc committee. It is my pleasure to assume the role as Credentialing Committee Chair.

Research & Education Committee – Denise Foster, Chair

This year, the E&R Committee is focusing on the development of webinars that will offer Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Currently, CEU webinars are in the works that will feature guest speakers and also address specific cannabis education tailored to cannabis nurses that go beyond what is presently available in other cannabis educational programs. Educational ACNA webinar topics include The Endocannabinoid System for Nurses, Pharmacology Concepts of Cannabis Therapeutics for Nurses, Introduction to Cannabis Nursing, The Nursing Process and Cannabis Nursing, and Legal & Political Aspects of Cannabis Nursing. Our first live Webinar was presented on February 25, 2019 and featured ACNA Member Frankie Soska, RN, who presented "*Cannabis Nursing in*



ACNA Website. These revisions will update and streamline services and resources for ACNA members as well as patients. Stay tuned as the

Florida's Medical Marijuana Program." ACNA members will be able to find this and all 2019 live Webinars on our ACNA website, as they will be recorded for later viewing for those who are unable to attend the live events.

In addition to developing webinar offerings, the R&E Committee has been busy revising our

Social Media & Communications Committee – Denise Foster, Chair

This newly-formed ACNA committee has met a few times already this year to develop our ACNA communication tools and ACNA Communications Plan. If you are a member of our Facebook ACNA Member forum, you may have noticed that some regular features are running weekly: Motivation Monday, Tuesday Chemovar of the Week, Wacky Wednesday, Terpene Thursday, and Friday Facts. Our FB ACNA Member forum is open to all ACNA members, where we encourage members to interact, collaborate, share, and learn from each other as cannabis nursing enters the realm of specialized nursing. Forum members should be assured that their membership to this forum remains private and confidential, as no member lists are shared with anyone outside the forum.

All our wonderful committee members are participating in several ways to bring ACNA-related news to our members through either our ACNA Member Facebook forum or ACNA Regional Member Facebook forums. If you haven't visited our ACNA Regional pages in a while, you might not have noticed that these Regional pages have transitioned to a private group, meaning that if you belong to a Regional page, your membership to that page is also private, just like our ACNA Member page. If you are not yet a member of either our Members

ACNA Website undergoes a dramatic revision. Highlights of these revisions include cannabis-related recommendations on books, web resources, and research-type tools for members and patients. Other exciting changes are coming, so be sure to visit our ACNA website often!

or Regional pages, ask to join your community of peers!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ACNAMembers/?ref=bookmarks>

A new change that has just recently occurred in our FB Members forum that should help its members uphold the mission of ACNA is the addition Facebook Social Media Community Standards and Guidelines. These "house rules" have been implemented in all ACNA Facebook forums. These guidelines protect ACNA as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization as well as our members. The guidelines mimic other non-profit organizational FB pages, where our members can be assured that our forums remains free from discrimination, spam, abuse or attack, harassment, offensive language, and commercial or personal promotion. We want ACNA Facebook forums to serve all members openly and equally, so we are committed to creating a space where our cannabis nurses feel safe to express themselves in relation to cannabis as a medicinal therapeutic. Please remember to use these guidelines when posting in any of our ACNA forums and contact any forum administrator if you have any questions or concerns.

Coming soon: ACNA will launch more social media connections on LinkedIn and Twitter!

Reminders to all ACNA Members!

Our ACNA website includes a Member Directory of all our current members. Check it out to see if there are any members in your area for a Meet Up opportunity!

ACNA would love to spread the word about cannabis events! Please visit the "Events" page on our ACNA website to fill out the form to let us know of an upcoming event or Meet Up.

ACNA Announces New Leadership

For the 2019-2020 term, Llewellyn Smith returns as ACNA Treasurer. Denise Foster has been appointed as ACNA Secretary.

Committee Chairs and members have been assigned for 2019-2020. The following Committees are currently operational in ACNA:

- Conference Committee: Carey Clark, Chair
- Credentialing Committee: Llewellyn Smith, Chair
- Finance Committee: Chip Devlin, Chair
- Membership Committee: Eloise Theisen, Chair
- Research & Education Committee: Denise Foster, Chair
- Social Media & Communications Committee: Denise Foster, Chair

Upcoming Events and Meet-Ups

March 13-March 16, Orlando, FL: The American Academy of the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Annual Assembly (AAHPM/HPNA). ACNA will be present at the American Academy of the Hospice and Palliative Medicine Annual Assembly. For more information, please visit the event website: <http://aahpm.org/meetings/assembly>.

March 14, 8:00 am PDT-March 17, 4:00 pm PDT, Sheraton San Diego, 1380 Harbor Island Dr, San Diego, CA 92101: California Association of Nurse Practitioners Educational Conference. ACNA President Elect Eloise Theisen, AGPCNP will be hosting a 3-hour workshop on Using Cannabis to Treat Pain in the Geriatric Population. For more information, please visit the website: <https://conference.canpweb.org/about/>.

March 23 2019, 8:00 am-5:00 pm PDT, Timber Creek Ballroom, 7050 Del Webb Blvd, Roseville, CA 95747: GSC Oncology Nursing Society March Symposium. ACNA President Elect Eloise Theisen, AGPCNP will be speaking on Cannabis in the Oncology Patient.

April 3, 2019, The Outlets at Sands Bethlehem, 77 Sands Blvd, Bethlehem, PA 18015: Your Patients are Using Cannabis – Here’s What You Need to Know. Phytocannabinoids are the compounds produced in hemp that include cannabidiol (CBD), a non-intoxicating component with enormous therapeutic potential. CBD has been shown to have value in supporting the immune system's natural activity against malignant cells, supporting calm and orderly neural activity, a healthy inflammatory response, healthy cognitive function and moods, supporting robust and healthy free radical scavenging activity, healthy sleep, and helping to protect and support the immune and nervous systems. Come learn about how CBD and Phytocannabinoids may help you on your healing journey! For more information, visit <https://satimedusa.com/blogs/research/live-seminar-healing-with-cbd-and-phytocannabinoids>.

April 11, 2019, 8:00 am PDT-April 14, 2019, 12:00 pm PDT, Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim, CA: Oncology Nursing Society Annual Conference. ACNA President Elect Eloise Theisen, AGPCNP will be speaking on Controversial Issues: Legalization of Cannabis. ACNA will also be present at this conference. For more information, visit <https://congress.ons.org/>.

April 11, 12:00 PM EST-April 13, 5:00 pm EST, CAMLS, 124 South Franklin St., Tampa, FL, 33602: Patients Out of Time: The Thirteenth National Clinical Conference on Cannabis Therapeutics. Conference theme: Cannabis - Whole Plant Medicine for the Whole Person. Pre-conference workshop on April 11: Integrating Cannabis into Medical Practice. Leading interdisciplinary cannabis conference in the US. Raphael Mechoulam will be speaking. For more information, please visit the website: www.patientsoutoftime.org.

April 24, 2019-April 26, 2019, Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center, Orland, FL: American Nursing Association (ANA) Quality and Innovation and Pathway to Excellence Co-Located Conference. ACNA will be present at the American Nursing Association (ANA) Quality and Innovation and Pathway to Excellence Co-Located Conference.

Happenings

Here is a small sample of what our members have been up to. If you have been active in cannabis nursing and would like to share your news with other ACNA members, please email denise@cannabisnurse.org with details of your cannabis nursing activities so we can share your news in upcoming newsletters!

From Jamie Rollins

Jamie has been working as a Cannabis Nurse since October of 2018. She has provided free lectures on CBD and the endocannabinoid system, monthly, to her community, at farmers markets and fairs. She shares three different CBD oils with her patients and has a stand at the weekly farmers market to bring more awareness to medical cannabis and offer free consultations. She started seeing cannabis patients in their homes with her partnering physician in December of 2018 to allow homebound patients access to a recommendation. She has provided cannabis consults to those patients, assisting them to find the right dispensary, setting up delivery of medications, helping patients determine which route of administration to utilize, and assisting them to find the right combination of medicine for their specific symptoms. She had her opening of her clinic in Hobe Sound Florida Friday February 8th where she and her partnering physician will be seeing patients monthly to



recommending medical cannabis and guide patients through the recommendation process in Florida. She feels blessed and honored to be able to be of service to her patients in this way and looks forward to serving an even greater number of patients in the future.
Jamie Rollins RN, BSN, CYT

From Maureen Smith:

Maureen Smith's "cannabis research piece was accepted for publication." Link here:
<https://www.cbdhacker.com/cbd-for-ptsd-remember-once-forget-the-rest/>

From Deborah McCauley:

January 14th was Lobbying day in Virginia for two very important bills: SB 1557 and HB 2079. I live in northern Virginia and my delegate is Senator Tim Hugo. He was very welcoming and I was in his office for close to 30 mins going over the medical benefits of cannabis and the giving him an overview of the ECS. Several VaNORML members were with me during the meeting. We all left feeling very good about the prospective change we provided to the senator.
He did not vote against either of the bills presented that day. :-)

SB 1557 was proposed by Senator Dunnivant would allow patients to receive full therapeutic-strength medical cannabis products. This is an add-on from last year's "Let Doctors Decide." There was a cap of 5% THC allowed for any medical cannabis patients in Virginia. With the expansion allowing Doctors to Decide, it only makes sense to allow the doctors to actually decide by allowing full therapeutic-strength medical cannabis per the physician's recommendation. This bill has been heard in the Virginia House and Senate and has been passed; it is on its way to the Governor's desk for signing. There is a high possibility it will pass! Very exciting!

HB 2079 was put forward by Senator Heretick. The purpose of this bill was to decriminalize simple possession of marijuana. Proposing Fines not Crimes and making it a misdemeanor charge instead of a felony. Sadly this bill was killed in subcommittee.

As we move forward with the expansion of the medical program in Virginia, I am eager to see positive changes. We can all help drive the change by continuing to reach out to our legislators. My experience has shown me that they really do want to do right by their constituents. Reach out to yours, the worst they can do is say no.

From Barbara Shey:

Recently, I presented at NYU Langone Winthrop Hospital's annual nursing education day. The topic was "Cannabis is Medicine." An hour is very limited time, so my objective was to whet their appetites to learn more and provide the basics. I began with the endocannabinoid system, then an introduction to the plant, defining seeds, terpenes, CBD effects, and THC effects; a brief history of the LONG history of use as discovered in archaeological finds; early preparations legally sold in the US prior to Anslinger's antics, and a smattering of disease-specific citations from the National Institutes of Health library. I shared the ANA's position statement as well as the position statement of the HPNA. I explained why the Schedule I categorization was so wrong and urged attendees to be part of the movement for descheduling. I provided resources, leading with the American Cannabis Nurses Association, urging them to keep learning, keep reading, and keep attending conferences.

These were nurses from different specialties with a variety of nursing experience, from relatively new nurses to "seasoned" nurses approaching retirement! Hopefully before the young nurses retire, cannabis will be mainstream "medicine."

I have provided this program (more than a few months ago) to NP students at Stony Brook University, Long Island Pain Management Nurses, and the Long Island chapter of HPNA. I'm so grateful for the wisdom and collaborative support of the ACNA
Barbara Shey, BS, RN-BC, CHPN

From Jessilyn Dolan:

On February 8, 2019, I tabled at the Vermont Cannabis Nurses Association at the UVM Industrial Hemp Conference as well as the following week at the 2nd Annual Cannabis at the Capitol conference. I am testifying for our hopeful tax and regulations next week to the house, and the week after to the senate.

Last week I also sat with the Agency of Agriculture, helping to develop rules and regulations for hemp production, processing, and marketing in Vermont.

I will be speaking at the Vermont NECANN (<https://www.necann.com/vermont/>) as well as on cannabis in pregnancy and breastfeeding at the 26th Annual Professional Lactation Conference (<http://Mca.org/Home.htm>), where we will be redoing this study from 5 years ago (I work at UVM in research): <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4692106/>. I will be speaking on cancer and cannabis in May at the 19th Annual Stowe Weekend of Hope (<https://www.stowehope.org/>).

