

# Executive Leadership Conference

FEBRUARY 23 – 25, 2026 | CLEARWATER BEACH, FL.

## Agenda

### Monday, February 23, 2026

7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

#### Registration

7 – 8 a.m.

#### Breakfast (Provided)

8 - 8:15 a.m.

#### Welcome From Course Directors

8:15 – 8:45 a.m.

#### From Policy to Practice: Federal Legislative and Regulatory Updates

Joe Ciavarro Jr., DMSc, MBA, PA-C, DFAAPA, Sondra M. DePalma, DHSc, PA-C, DFAAPA

In a dynamic healthcare legislative and regulatory environment, PA and APRN leaders must maintain awareness of current federal legislative and regulatory barriers to scope of practice and reimbursement and engage in understanding proposed and pending legislation and regulatory changes. Join AAPA's advocacy experts presenting an overview of the legislative and regulatory process in today's political climate, regulatory changes to PA and APRN practices, and AAPA's key legislative priorities.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe key steps in passing PA related legislation in today's congressional environment
- Identify important legislative and regulatory trends impacting PA and APRN practice
- Evaluate today's political climate and its impact on PA and APRN practice

8:45 – 9:45 a.m.

#### AI in Healthcare: The Good, the Bad, and the Unknown

Harvey Castro, MD, MBA

This session explores the rapidly evolving role of artificial intelligence in healthcare through a balanced lens of promise, pitfalls, and uncertainty. Participants will examine how clinicians are currently using AI tools, where these technologies deliver measurable value, and where they introduce new clinical, ethical, and operational risks. The discussion will clarify distinctions between medical-grade AI and general-purpose

models, highlight common misuse patterns, and outline best practices for responsible adoption. The session concludes with a forward-looking perspective on emerging capabilities, regulatory considerations, and how physicians can remain in control as AI transitions from advisory systems to increasingly autonomous tools.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Differentiate between clinically validated medical AI tools and general-purpose AI models commonly used by clinicians
- Identify real-world benefits of AI in healthcare, including efficiency gains, clinical decision support, and workflow augmentation
- Recognize key risks, limitations, and unintended consequences of AI adoption, including bias, hallucinations, overreliance, and liability concerns
- Apply practical strategies for using AI safely and effectively in clinical practice while maintaining human oversight and clinical judgment
- Anticipate emerging trends and unknowns in AI evolution that may impact healthcare delivery, regulation, and the physician workforce

9:45 - 10:15 a.m.

#### **Exhibits/Break**

10:15 – 11:15 a.m.

#### **Ring Ring: This is your provider, how can I help you? Reverse engineering patient access FTW**

Chris Hyer, PA-C

What if the next time a high-risk patient called, the voice that answered wasn't a call center—but their provider? At VillageMD, Chris Hyer, PA-C, led a redesign of virtual access that empowered APPs to directly manage patient calls and texts and care coordination for risk-stratified populations. This “reverse-engineered” model strengthened relationships, improved continuity, and reduced emergency department utilization by preventing more than 4,000 ER visits in one year.

And the best part? The APPs thrived. Operating at the top of their license, they solved real problems in real time, grew as clinicians and leaders, and rediscovered joy in delivering high-impact care—not packaged in 15-minute time slots where patients feel like they're on a conveyor belt.

Attendees will learn how APP-led virtual models can drive measurable value, reimagine triage workflows, and redefine what meaningful work looks like in value-based care.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Think differently about patient query triage
- Consider more non-traditional roles for physicians and APPs
- Rethink provider roles in a value-based care world

11:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**From Vision to Action: Empowering PAs and APRNs to Shape the Future of Healthcare**

Todd Pickard, DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, FASCO

In this opening keynote, the AAPA President, Todd Pickard, explores how transformational leadership principles can empower PA and APRN leaders to drive meaningful change in their organizations and communities. Through inspiring examples and practical insights, attendees will discover how to move beyond traditional management approaches to become visionary leaders who inspire teams, champion innovation, and advocate for the advancement of advanced practice providers in an rapidly evolving healthcare system.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Recognize the core principles of transformational leadership and how they apply to advancing the PA and NP professions in an evolving healthcare landscape, including inspiring shared vision, fostering innovation, and empowering team members at all levels
- Identify strategies to cultivate transformational leadership practices within their own organizations and communities, enabling them to drive meaningful change in clinical practice, policy advocacy, and interprofessional collaboration
- Articulate the role of transformational leadership in addressing current challenges facing advanced practice providers, including scope of practice barriers, workforce shortages, and healthcare equity, while positioning PAs and NPs as essential leaders in healthcare transformation

12– 1 p.m.

**Lunch**

1 – 2 p.m.

### **It Would Be My Privilege...**

Leslie Clayton DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, Sarah Vanderlinden DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA

This presentation examines the influential role PA and APRN leaders can play in shaping hospital privileging standards to advance patient safety, competency validation, and regulatory compliance. It will review current literature about best practices for establishing privileging criteria, underscoring the necessity of PA and APRN involvement in the development process. Opportunities for impact include shaping medical staff definitions, core and specialty privileging criteria, and effective workflows for privileging changes. By guiding organizational criteria and process development, PA and APRN leadership ensures the implementation of rigorous standards, promotes high-quality care, and broadens patient access.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Discuss the purpose of privileging in the hospital setting
- Review the literature and standards utilized to establish privileging criteria
- Describe workflows and management systems that relate to development, change, and application of privileges
- Articulate why PAs and APRNs must be involved in privileging criteria development

2 – 3 p.m.

### **Compensation Redesign Journey and Success Metrics**

Stacey Becker, DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, Sarah Kasner, MBA

In this session participants will learn about the initial steps to compensation redesign including assessment of the workforce and organizational readiness. Topics covered will include discussion of key elements of a compensation model as well as identifying and addressing barriers. The session is designed for individuals with varying levels of experience with APP compensation.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe foundational elements of the evolution of compensation change
- Develop strategies around how to approach initiating compensation redesign

- Articulate challenges associated with implementation of new compensation processes

3 – 3:30 p.m.

### **Exhibits/Break**

3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

### **Beyond the Blueprint: Adaptive APP Leadership Structures**

Rhonda Hoyer, MS, RN, APNP, ANP-C, Kristen Panther, ANP-BC

This session delves into how Advanced Practice Provider (APP) leadership structures adapt across diverse healthcare organizations. Drawing on real-world experience, presenters will discuss transitions between organizations of varying scale and complexity, emphasizing the need for evolving leadership models that respond to unique organizational demands. Attendees will learn how organizational culture and parallel leadership frameworks influence APP governance and how to adapt structures to accommodate workforce growth and shifting executive priorities. Practical strategies will be provided for designing and scaling resilient, responsive leadership models that support ongoing change and advancement in healthcare settings.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Compare and contrast APP leadership structures across organizations of varying size, culture, and complexity
- Evaluate the influence of organizational culture, parallel leadership models, and functional accountabilities on APP leadership design
- Apply adaptive leadership strategies to evolve or scale APP structures in response to workforce growth and changing executive priorities

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

### **The Real House-Spouses of Privileging, Compensation, and Leadership Panel**

Aaron Browne, PA-C (Moderator), Leslie Clayton DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, Sarah Vanderlinden DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, Stacey Becker, DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA, Sarah Kasner, MBA, Rhonda Hoyer, MS, RN, APNP, ANP-C, Kristen Panther, ANP-BC

This panel discussion will provide tangible examples of compensation, privileging, and leadership challenges across multiple healthcare institutions.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Differentiate examples of privileging challenges across different healthcare institutions

- Differentiate examples of compensation design between healthcare institutions
- Differentiate examples of leadership structure design and implementation across different healthcare institutions

5:30 – 7 p.m.

### **Networking Reception**

**Tuesday, February 24, 2026**

7 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

### **Registration**

7 – 8 a.m.

### **Breakfast (Provided)**

8 – 9 a.m.

### **Turning up the Volume: Collective Strategies for APP Visibility**

Emilie Davis, PA-C, Clair Kuriakose, MBA, PA-C, FACHE

Join two APP leaders as they share their ongoing journey to elevate the role of Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) within their healthcare systems and externally to have a national impact. This session will explore how organizations are strategically integrating APPs into broader system goals, and how leaders are measuring the effectiveness of engagement strategies to ensure meaningful participation and impact. Attendees will also review external efforts to increase national awareness of the APP role in healthcare, including advocacy, education, and recognition platforms. Finally, the session will look ahead to what's on the horizon for APP leaders as the healthcare environment continues to evolve—highlighting emerging opportunities, challenges, and leadership pathways. Whether you're an APP leader or a stakeholder in APP advancement, this session offers insights and inspiration to help you champion visibility and influence for APPs in your organization and beyond.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Explore system-level approaches to embedding APPs into organizational strategy and leadership structures (Strategic Seat at the Table) Enhance career adaptability
- Evaluate the effectiveness of APP engagement strategies and their impact on leadership development and system outcomes (Engagement that Drives Results)
- Explore external methods—advocacy, media, and partnerships—that elevate the APP role across the healthcare industry (Amplify the APP Voice Nationally)

- Discuss emerging trends and evolving expectations for APP leaders in a rapidly changing healthcare environment (Future-Ready APP Leadership)

9 – 10:30 a.m.

**Future-Proof Yourself as a Leader: Own and Leverage Your Humanness to Thrive in a Digital World**

Rosie Ward, Ph.D.

Being human is messy. We are hardwired to be on high alert for threats, activating our biological hardwired instincts to self-protect and cling tightly to what is familiar. Yet our world demands that we are able to lean into discomfort and disruption, especially as automation accelerates and AI becomes part of every workflow. This creates a gap that keeps us stuck more than we realize, preventing us from activating our uniquely human-centric leadership skills that are critical now more than ever. This insightful and energizing session will normalize our shared human experience; give you language to name, own and challenge the inner faulty programming that quietly works against us; and provide a path forward so you can maximize your impact and future-proof yourself as a leader.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe how automation and constant change can trigger leaders’ self-protective wiring
- Identify the core Faulty Programs that activate our biological instincts to self-protect, quietly sabotage leaders and erode workplace culture
- Practice tools to name, own and challenge inner faulty programming and apply a roadmap to move towards future-ready, human-centered leadership

10:30 - 11 a.m.

**Exhibits/Break**

11 – 11:15 a.m.

**The Fellowship of the APPs: Building a Workforce Legacy**

Amanda Ben Simon, MMS, PA-C

“The Fellowship of the APPs: Building a Workforce Legacy” explores how an APP fellowship program can unlock untapped workforce potential and deliver measurable ROI. As a strategic educational experience, the fellowship model prepares APPs for historically difficult-to-fill specialties while equipping them with the versatility to serve in flex positions across multiple units. Participants will examine evidence and case

examples demonstrating how fellowships accelerate onboarding, expand workforce agility, lessen the need for costly per diem contracts, and create sustainable hiring pipelines. By the end of the session, attendees will be exposed to practical approaches to leverage fellowship outcomes in workforce planning initiatives that drive growth, efficiency, and patient care excellence.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Analyze APP fellowship programs as strategic investments by evaluating ROI metrics such as retention, recruitment pipeline, and clinical productivity
- Identify workforce strategy opportunities where fellowship-trained APPs bridge care gaps, enhance team efficiency, and contribute to organizational growth
- Apply evidence-based approaches to leverage fellowship outcomes for long-term workforce planning, aligning APP training with institutional priorities and patient care needs

11:15 - 11:30 a.m.

### **The Art of Onboarding**

Kristen Panther, ANP-BC

This session will focus on how our organization took a bare bones orientation approach and built a dynamic framework to support organizational strategy while focusing on local level clinical expertise and helped to identify and remediate early struggling employees.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Examine and integrate central and local onboarding practices
- Apply entrustable professional activity framework to building a dynamic onboarding for new employees
- Evaluate and respond to struggling employee transitions

11:30 - 11:45 a.m.

### **Guiding the Next Generation: The Transformative Value of Mentorship in APRN/PA Transition to Practice Programs**

Christie Erickson DNP, MBA, APRN, CNP, FAANP

This session will highlight the impact of mentorship on engagement and retention. The role of mentors in clinical confidence and productivity will also be demonstrated.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Explore how structured mentorship programs can address low engagement and high turnover rates among newly graduated APRNs and PAs, fostering professional autonomy and long-term commitment to the organization
- Examine how mentorship improves clinical competence, confidence, and productivity in new hires, emphasizing the importance of mentor training, accountability, and dedicated time for mentorship.

11:45 a.m. – 12 p.m.

### **Optimizing APP Transition: Leveraging Third-Party Expertise and Stakeholder Collaboration**

Heather Elkins, PA-C

This session focuses on optimizing APP Transition to Practice programs and fellowship pathways through a scalable model that supports providers from onboarding to advanced integration. Learn how leveraging external partnerships and internal stakeholders accelerates readiness, retention, and professional development. Attendees will gain insights into how external partnerships can complement internal resources, enhance professional development, and create a culture of continuous learning and support. Whether you're building a new program or refining an existing one, this session will offer actionable strategies to align stakeholders, engage external experts, and drive measurable outcomes in APP transition and fellowship success.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify the critical components of a successful Transition to Practice model for Advanced Practice Providers (APPs), including the roles of education, mentorship, and professional development
- Explore strategies for integrating third-party vendors to enhance APP transition to practice and professional development through structured support systems
- Demonstrate how to engage key stakeholders- including clinical leaders, operational teams, and executive sponsors- to align goals and sustain long-term success in APP practice readiness

12 – 12:30 p.m.

### **Practice-Ready Perspectives: A Comparative Review on APP Onboarding Panel**

Rhonda Hoyer, MS, RN, APNP, ANP-C (Moderator), Amanda Ben Simon, MMS, PA-C, Heather Elkins, PA-C, Kristen Panther, ANP-BC, Christie Erickson DNP, MBA, APRN, CNP, FAANP

This facilitated panel discussion builds on presentations from four APP leaders, each sharing their organization's approach to onboarding and orienting Advanced Practice Providers. The session will compare traditional orientation programs, third-party didactic support, and structured fellowship models. Through guided dialogue, panelists will explore what worked, what didn't, and how each model supports clinical competency and transition to practice. ROI, scalability, and alignment with organizational goals will be examined. Attendees will be invited into the conversation to reflect on their own onboarding strategies and consider new approaches for integrating APPs effectively and sustainably.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Compare and contrast APP onboarding and orientation strategies presented by panelists, including traditional models, vendor-supported didactic programs, and clinical fellowships
- Critically evaluate the ROI and effectiveness of each approach in supporting APP transition to practice and clinical competency
- Engage in collaborative dialogue to identify best practices, common challenges, and opportunities for innovation in APP onboarding

12:30 – 2 p.m.

**Lunch and Learn - Leadership Roundtable: Key Issues Shaping Advanced Practice sponsored by SullivanCotter**

Zachary Hartsell, Amy Noecker, Sarah Kasner, Hadley Powless, Joel Villegas

Join SullivanCotter leaders for an interactive roundtable focused on the evolving role of PAs and APRNs. Through live polling and open discussion, the panel will explore current market trends, workforce challenges, compensation dynamics, and care model innovations impacting advanced practice. Attendees are encouraged to share perspectives and engage in a candid dialogue on the key issues shaping the future of the advanced practice workforce.

2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

**Lessons from the Leadership Journey**

Jennifer Quilty, DNP, APRN, MBA

This session will offer strategies about the importance of cultivating trust, embracing vulnerability, and leading with purpose in times of change.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Inspire the strengthening of relationships
- Lean into new opportunities
- Harness the power of collaboration to become a leader

3 – 4 p.m.

### **Leveraging Leadership Across the State**

Melissa Dunlop, MBA, PA-C, DFAAPA, Benjamin R. Reynolds, MSPAS, PA-C, DFAAPA, Corinna Sicoutris, MSN, CRNP, FAANP, FCCM, FACHE

This session will explore the journey of developing the Pennsylvania Alliance of Advanced Practice Leaders (PAAPL), an interprofessional coalition representing PAs, NPs, CRNAs, and CNMs leaders from across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Presenters will share how a small group of thought leaders transformed shared frustrations into a statewide movement for advocacy, workforce optimization, and APP leadership. Attendees will learn about PAAPL's mission, the challenges faced during its early development, and the strategies used to build partnerships, strengthen visibility, and drive policy change. By examining PAAPL's growth through the lens of real-world wins and obstacles, participants will gain insights into how interprofessional leadership can address barriers, influence policy, and create sustainable structures for APP advancement within their own systems.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Describe the founding vision and mission of PAAPL and explain how interprofessional APP leadership was mobilized across health systems in Pennsylvania.
- Analyze key challenges and opportunities identified during PAAPL's early development, including regulatory barriers, payer enrollment, and competing organizational priorities.
- Recognize strategies for coalition-building and advocacy that PAAPL has employed to strengthen visibility, influence legislation, and align APP leadership statewide
- Apply lessons learned from PAAPL's journey to their own organizations in order to advance APP advocacy, optimize workforce structures, and foster sustainable leadership models

4 – 4:30 p.m.

### **Exhibits and Break**

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

### **Who Leads When AI Learns? Leveraging Artificial Intelligence with Ethical Leadership**

Amy Bronson, EdD, PA-C, Paulius Mui, MD

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming healthcare, education, and leadership within healthcare. As AI tools become embedded in clinical decision-making, data management, and professional development, leaders face growing responsibility to ensure these technologies are applied ethically and equitably. This session explores the intersection of leadership, ethics, and innovation while challenging participants to consider what it means to “lead when AI learns.”

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Examine ethical principles guiding responsible AI use
- Evaluate roles of clinical and academic leaders in AI-enhanced decisions
- Develop strategies to for ethical integration of AI tools

## **Wednesday, February 25, 2026**

7 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

### **Registration**

7 - 8 a.m.

### **Breakfast (Provided)**

8 – 9 a.m.

### **Beyond Buzzwords: Making Inclusive Leadership Real**

Oyinkansola Okubanjo, MD

Participants will be able to define inclusive leadership and identify key behaviors that foster equity, belonging, and psychological safety within healthcare teams. We will discuss how inclusive leadership improves clinical outcomes, enhances team collaboration, and reduces disparities in healthcare delivery. We will discuss how to integrate inclusive practices into your leadership approach, including communication techniques, decision-making frameworks, and accountability measures.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Recognize the Core Principles of Inclusive Leadership
- Discuss the Impact of Inclusive Leadership on Patient Care and Team Performance
- Apply Practical Strategies to Lead Inclusively in Healthcare Settings

9 – 10 a.m.

### **Next Chapter Leadership: Thriving Through Career Transitions**

Trish Anen RN,MBA (Moderator), Rhonda Hoyer, MS, RN, APNP, ANP-C, Chris Hyer, PA-C, Ivonne Johnson, DNP, MBA, APRN, ANP-C, PNP-C, Monica Ward PA-C, MPAS, AT, DFAAPA

This dynamic panel explores the personal and professional journeys of Advanced Practice Provider (APP) leaders who have navigated both voluntary and unexpected job transitions. This panel conversation will offer candid insights, practical strategies, and leadership lessons to help attendees approach change with clarity, resilience, and purpose. Attendees will leave with tools to support themselves—and others—through pivotal career shifts.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Identify key signals and decision-making frameworks that influence voluntary and involuntary job transitions for Advanced Practice Providers (APPs)
- Apply strategic tools and leadership behaviors to navigate the first 90 days of a professional transition while maintaining credibility and focus
- Reflect on personal growth and leadership evolution post-transition, and articulate lessons learned to support others facing similar career shifts

10 – 10:30 a.m.

#### **Break to Check Out of Hotel**

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

#### **Building your social network – Putting Yourself Out There “How do you look and land the next role”**

Michele Cambron, PA-C

Landing a new role or leadership position takes more than clinical excellence and hard work. In today’s world, it often requires being seen, remembered, and positioned for the right opportunities. This session gives PAs practical tools to build a personal brand and network that move them from overlooked to recruited. We’ll explore how to define and communicate unique value, expand presence through internal, external, and online networking, and uncover opportunities that may never appear on job boards. We’ll also cover modern strategies for creating resumes and cover letters that pass applicant tracking systems (ATS) and reach the right desks. Participants will leave with a concise brand statement, concrete networking strategies, knowledge of where to find job postings, and an action plan to evolve their brand over time. Whether seeking a new clinical role, exploring non-clinical opportunities, or aiming for leadership, this session provides the prescription for career success.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Define the core elements of a personal brand and explain how branding impacts visibility, networking, and access to leadership opportunities for PAs
- Identify effective strategies to expand professional networks across internal (within organizations), external (associations, public speaking), and online (LinkedIn, forums, groups) settings
- Apply practical job-search techniques — including evaluating hidden job markets, tailoring applicant tracking system (ATS)–friendly resumes and cover letters, and leveraging recruiters — to position themselves for their next clinical or leadership role
- Craft a concise personal brand statement that communicates unique value and can be applied to networking, interviews, and leadership opportunities

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

### **Elevate Your Leadership: Building Your Executive Presence and Crafting a Standout Executive Resume**

Trish Anen RN,MBA

This session empowers attendees to unlock their leadership potential by enhancing their executive presence and building an impactful resume. Through expert insights and coaching experience participants will learn how executive presence influences career growth and success within your organization. This session will demystify the key components of a standout leadership resume providing practical tips to showcase achievements and differentiate oneself in a competitive market. Attendees will engage in interactive discussions and leave with actionable tools to enhance their professional image and confidently navigate career transitions whether planned or unexpected.

At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:

- Define executive presence and articulate its importance in today's leadership roles
- Share actionable insights on executive presence drawn from real world coaching experiences
- Identify the essential elements of a leadership resume that sets candidates apart
- Offer practical strategies for developing an impactful resume