

Newsletter



Letter from the President

It is an incredible honor to begin serving as President of the Association of PAs in Oncology. For those I have not yet had the opportunity to meet, I have been privileged to serve APAO in various volunteer leadership roles over the past several years, and it is a true honor to continue that service in this new capacity. I am grateful for the opportunity to lead this outstanding community and build on the strong foundation established by those who have served before us. I especially want to thank our outgoing Board of Directors officers for their dedication, leadership, and countless volunteer hours that have strengthened APAO, and to welcome our new Board members as we begin an exciting year together.

As we look to the future, I am excited to continue the momentum already underway. Our priorities include strengthening collaborations with other organizations to further establish APAO as the leading voice for Physician Associates in oncology, expanding advocacy efforts alongside AAPA and other partners to champion initiatives for improving cancer care, supporting PA-

authored competencies and certification efforts, increasing opportunities for member involvement through committees and volunteer initiatives, and growing our membership through institutional collaborations and strategic partnerships.

APAO has always been driven by members who are passionate about advancing our profession and improving the lives of patients with cancer. Thank you for your continued engagement, support, and willingness to serve. I look forward to working alongside each of you in the coming year, and I hope to see many of you in NYC at the Symposium as we continue learning from one another and shaping the future of oncology practice together.

A Message From
Cory Edgar, DMSc, PA-C
APAO President



APAO Advocacy Update: Two Major Wins

PA Victory - The Department of Education Professional Degree Definition

On December 19, 2025, The Department of Education (ED) finalized its Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) regulations, which outlined a narrowed list of what qualifies as a professional degree and excluded many healthcare degrees such as PA, greatly reducing their graduate loan limits. The American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) and the PA Education Association (PAEA) filed a lawsuit on June 3, 2026, against the U.S. Department of Education in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, challenging the final Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) rule as unlawful. On June 24, 2026, a federal district court ruled to temporarily pause (stay) key parts of the RISE rule's professional degree definition just days before implementation.

On June 29, 2026, In direct response to the court order in AAPA and PAEA's legal challenge, ED issued updated implementation guidance recognizing PA programs as professional degree programs for purposes of administering the new federal student loan limits while the Court's order remains in effect.

This is an important and encouraging development. It reflects the Department's implementation of the Court's order and means that, for now, PA programs are included among the professional degree programs eligible for the higher, \$50,000-per-year federal borrowing limits established under the new law. We appreciate the strong advocacy of AAPA and PAEA to ensure a robust pipeline for the PA profession. Read more [here](#).

NCCPA Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) in Oncology Approved!

Thanks to the persistent effort of APAO leadership and close collaboration with The Advanced Practitioner Society for Hematology and Oncology (APSHO), the proposal to develop the Oncology CAQ for PAs was approved this year.

This year the proposal to develop the Oncology CAQ for PAs was approved. APAO is aware and supporting the effort to develop the content for this Specialty Certification. As an organization we are excited to see PA-led competencies and certifications being developed. Read more from NCCPA [here](#). The path to developing a new CAQ begins with PA involvement. NCCPA will begin recruiting PAs specializing in Oncology to serve as subject matter experts for the development of the new CAQs. Apply to volunteer [here](#).



Leadership & Learning

New Board of Directors

We are pleased to announce the results of the recent Board of Directors election and to formally welcome the leadership team for the 2026–2027 term.

2026–2027 APAO Board of Directors

- **President - Cory Edgar**
- **President-Elect - Kathleen Boyle**
- **Past President - Kerri Rall**
- **Treasurer - Samantha Dickson**
- **House of Delegates (HOD) - Elizabeth Fitzgerald**
- **Director at Large - Leesha Gunnink**
- **Director at Large - Jeanne Jacobs**
- **Appointed Director - Alisha DeTroye**
- **Appointed Director - Katie Marcucci**
- **Student Representative - Alisha Chhabra**

Congratulations to all of them on their new roles! We are confident their leadership will continue to strengthen APAO's mission and support our growing community of PAs in oncology.

We also want to extend our sincere gratitude to the outgoing Board members whose dedication and service have shaped APAO over the past term:

- Tiffany Statler, outgoing Past President
- Sarah Vitulli, outgoing Treasurer
- Sydney Tharp, outgoing Student Representative

Thank you all for your tireless commitment and the many contributions you've made to our Association.



LEADERSHIP



COLLABORATION



ADVOCACY



IMPACT

Gain the knowledge and skills you need from top-level speakers and oncology experts! August 13 - 16, 2026

The 29th Annual Oncology Symposium for the Healthcare Provider presented by APAO provides a space where a community of experts can share their practice of turning visions into reality.

- Explore best practices and incorporate new ideas into your own practice.
- Experience the latest in technology from our sponsors with vendors and suppliers available for consultation.
- Cheer on your peers as recipients of the following awards Lifetime Achievement Award, Academic Award, Research Award, Investigator Award, and Student Scholarship.

Most importantly, connect with your peers and start potentially lifelong partnerships and friendships!



Association of PAs in Oncology

222 S. Westmonte Drive, Suite 111, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
Phone: 407-774-7880 | Fax: 407-774-6440 | Email: admin@apao.cc

