



The International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses Presents

# ISPN 2026

March 18-21, 2026 • Grand Hyatt Seattle

## Business Meeting Agenda & Reports



## Business Meeting and President's Wrap-up

Seattle, Washington • March 20, 2026, from 1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

<b>1</b>	<b>1:30 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call to Order &amp; Welcome</li> <li>• President's Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Year-at-a-Glance</li> <li>» Past Year Highlights</li> <li>» Recognize Current ISPN Board of Directors</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Daniel Wesemann
<b>2</b>	<b>1:40 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer's Report</li> <li>• Recap of Past Five Years: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Finances</li> <li>» Membership Stats</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Shawn Gallagher
<b>3</b>	<b>1:45 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Recognitions &amp; Thank You's</li> <li>• Remembering Those We Lost—Moment of Silence</li> </ul>	Daniel Wesemann
<b>4</b>	<b>1:50 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new Board and Nominating Committee Members</li> </ul>	Daniel Wesemann
<b>5</b>	<b>1:55 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President's Wrap-up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Strategic Plan Moving Forward</li> <li>» Announce ANCC Winner</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Daniel Wesemann
<b>6</b>	<b>2:05 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Floor for Member Discussion</li> </ul>	Daniel Wesemann, Members
<b>7</b>	<b>2:35 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledgement of Outgoing President <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Passing of the crystal gavel</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Looking forward to next year!</li> </ul>	Brayden Kameg
<b>8</b>	<b>2:45 p.m.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjourn for ISPN Awards Ceremony</li> </ul>	Brayden Kameg



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# President's Report 2026

**Submitted by:** Daniel Wesemann, DNP, MSW,  
APRN, PMHNP-BC, FAANP, FAAN

### Summary of activities:

#### Strategic Goals:

- *Increase ISPN influence and proactive support for mental health of populations.*
  - ISPN became an ally to O\*NET with the Department of Labor due to having ISPN members available for Department of Labor survey to validate the O\*NET's description of Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses is accurate.
  - Held 3 different listening sessions in July, August and January (total number of members attending 37)
  - Developed and published two Board approved Position Statements
- *Increase the recognition of ISPN amongst professionals and the public.*
  - Published Quarterly Newsletter ISPN Connections
  - Increased activity and following on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (Twitter)!
  - Dr. Adekemi (Kemi) Shodunke, DNP PMHNP-BC was appointed to be the chair of ISPN's communication committee and has seen a significant increase in ISPN's presence on social media
- *Advance mental health knowledge, skill, and expertise of members and interprofessional colleagues.*
  - Membership approved bylaw change to ISPN (92%) to make a new Fellows of ISPN (FISPAN) committee celebrating the work of psychiatric-mental health advanced practice nurses. Induction of the charter members will be held at the 2026 annual conference. Policies and procedures were developed and approved by the board on how the class of 2027 will be nominated, selected and inducted.
  - Continued strong collaboration with Archives of Psychiatric Nursing
  - Developed ongoing Program Director meetings for the purpose of sharing best practice educational practices
  - On-going discussions with intNSA's past president Dana Murphy to develop a joint conference between intNSA and ISPN in 2027
  - Our Membership Committee is actively engaged in creating ways to attract and retain new members through value-added programs, such as the popular complimentary Webinar series
  - Offered 5 webinars, all of which can be viewed on-demand
    - » May - Cyberbullying and Youth: Prevention, Empowerment, and Community Solutions, Elizabeth Hutson
    - » July - Guidelines For Prescribing Psychotropics to Children/Adolescents, Megan Esoldo
    - » September - Digital Interventions for Suicide Assessment and Safety Planning, Jamie Zelazny
    - » November - Adolescent Substance Use: Details Psychiatric Nurses Need to Know, Angela Nash
    - » February - Adolescent Voices, Clinical Gaps: Rethinking Perinatal Mental Health Pathways for Young Mothers, Olajumoke Ojeleye

- Member spotlight series featured:
  - » May Dr. Emily Hauenstein discussed her passion for mental health research
  - » June Dr. Kate Wheeler for PTSD Awareness month
  - » September Dr. Rie Chiba recognize September 10th as World Suicide Prevention Day and September as National Suicide Prevention Month
  - » October Dr. Shawn Gallagher acknowledge World Mental Health Day coming up on October 10th and reflect on Mental Illness Awareness Week
  - » November 2025 Psychiatric Mental Health Advocacy Award Winner Leslie Carpenter discusses her advocacy work and recognize November as National Family Caregiver Month
  - » December Dr. Jennifer Graber acknowledging December as Seasonal Affective Disorder Awareness Month
  - » January Dr. Pamela Galehouse shares her passion for policy has inspired her to lead the Policy Committee
  - » February Dr. Gabrielle Abelard shares her passion for ISPN and leading the ISPN Conference committee for 3 years
  
- *Cultivate individual and organizational partnerships locally and globally.*
  - 232 new members
  - 256 student members
  - ISPN sent the only 2 US members (Dr Daniel Wesemann, current president and Dr Amanda Baltierra, director) to Barcelona, Spain to be part of the first ever International Council of Mental Health Nurses. The meeting had 72 members from 10 different countries and 12 different professional organizations.
  - ISPN has become a specialty affiliate with the International Council of Nurses (ICN). ISPN is only the 11<sup>th</sup> specialty affiliate within ICN and the only one with psychiatric-mental health expertise
  - ISPN continues to await approval for associate status of the United Nations Department of Global Communications Civil Society Unit (DGC CSU)
  - Completed Memorandum of understanding to establish two new partnerships
    - » International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF)
    - » Australian College of Mental Health Nurses
  - Strengthened existing partnerships:
    - » National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists (NACNS)
    - » The International Nurses Society on Addictions (intNSA)
    - » Japan Academy of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing (JAPMHN)
    - » Sri Lankan Professional Nurses' Clinical Society, Sri Lanka
    - » Indian Society of Psychiatric Nurses (ISPN)
    - » American Nurses Credentialing Center
    - » World Continuing Education Alliance



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# Awards Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Jennifer Graber, Committee Chair

### Committee Members:

Jennifer Graber (Chair), Elizabeth Bonham, Kimberly Freisenbruch, Wanda Hilliard, Don Howe, Heeyoung Lee, Barbara Peterson, Fatima Ramos Marcus, Kathleen McCoy, Marian Newton, Susan Glodstein (Board Liaison)

### Summary of Activities:

- The Awards Committee reviewed multiple nominations submitted in seven awards categories. After comments and ranking of each nominee, it was determined that awards would be presented in all categories in 2026:
  - ISPN Psychiatric Mental Health Advocacy Award
  - ISPN Diversity and Equity Award
  - Living Legends Award
  - Education Award
  - Melva Jo Hendrix Lectureship Award
  - ISPN Clinical Practice Award
  - ISPN Research Award
    - » Notification letters were sent to award recipients as well as those who were nominated but did not receive an award.
- In addition, the committee reviewed and scored 31 posters. 5 categories were awarded 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place. The categories included: Advancing Equity and Inclusion: Trauma-Informed and Culturally Responsive Psychiatric Nursing, Evidence-Based Practice and Research, Psychotherapy, Substance Use and Co-Occurring Disorders, and Student. Winners in each of the awarded categories will receive recognition during the ISPN annual conference.
- The Awards Committee Liaison, Susan Glodstein, will present awards at the 2026 annual conference.



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# Conference Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Gabrielle Abelard, Committee Chair

### **Committee Members:**

Gabrielle P Abelard (Chair), Tonjanika 'TJ' Ballard, Shantell Burns, Susan Glodstein, Karan Kverno, Fatima Ramos-Marcuse, Ruthy Lindvall, Chris Tersigni, Dan Wesemann (Board Liaison)

### **Summary of Activities:**

#### **Theme & Objectives**

- Developed the theme and objectives for the 2026 Annual Conference.
- Revised the conference abstract submission packet to improve formatting and clarity.
- Enhanced communications by:
  - Providing clearer instructions to abstract reviewers regarding the blinded review process.
  - Providing clearer instructions to abstract submitters regarding blinding requirements and timelines.
- Extended the abstract submission deadline to increase overall submission volume.

#### **Committee Formation**

- Recruited and confirmed Conference Planning Committee members.
- Conducted a targeted search for Seattle-area ISPN members to join the committee.
  - ISPN President assisted with outreach to Seattle members.
- Three ISPN members from New Orleans volunteered initially; one member later stepped down.

#### **Speaker Recruitment**

- Secured a diverse group of keynotes and invited speakers.
- Created and distributed:
  - Save the Date conference video
  - Registration Open conference video
- Two pre-conference workshop speakers also submitted promotional workshop videos.

#### **Abstract & Poster Process**

- Managed the Call for Abstracts, receiving 117+ submissions (an increase of one from the previous year).
- Abstract call emphasized conference themes, prioritizing:
  - Artificial intelligence
  - Culture
  - Practice
  - Psychopharmacology
- Oversaw blinded peer review, resulting in:
  - 55 oral presentations
  - 55 poster presentations
    - » Poster presentations increased by 25 compared to last year by transitioning to a vertical poster format.

- » Highly ranked pharmaceutical posters were included.
- Increased international participation by prioritizing and reviewing highly ranked international submissions.
- Welcomed presenters from the United States, Germany, Japan, Thailand, and the United Kingdom, creating the most globally diverse conference lineup to date.
- Recruited an Abstract Review Committee with co-chairs:
  - One conference committee member
  - One non-conference committee member
- Managed acceptance notifications and ongoing communication with presenters.

### **Conference Program Development**

- Designed the Annual Conference program based on accepted abstracts and thematic priorities.
- Psychopharmacology & Artificial Intelligence Integration - incorporated psychopharmacology and artificial intelligence content into:
  - Annual Conference sessions
  - Pre-conference workshops

### **Entertainment & Attendee Engagement**

- Secured and organized:
  - Opening night DJ (new)
  - Photo booth (returning concept from 2025)
  - SWAG networking night (new)
  - “Get to Know You” raffle (returning from 2024 and 2025)
  - Relaxation Room will be in a central area (returning from 2024, 2025)

### **Technology & Outreach**

- Continued use of the WHOVA platform for a third consecutive year.
- Planned continued use of Linktree for ISPN event promotion (second year).
- Led active social media campaigns, including speaker feature videos.

### **Sponsorship & Exhibitors**

- Spearheaded sponsorship and exhibitor recruitment efforts.
- This year, special advertisement was created and shared on social media for marketing and recruitment of sponsors/ exhibitors

### **Continuing Education Credits**

- Submitted applications for contact hour approval.
- Identified and resolved conflicts of interest (COIs).
- Georgia Nurses Association approved 48 contact hours, approval number 203414703

### **Marketing & Communications**

- Promoted the Annual Conference through:
  - Social media
  - Website updates
  - Membership mailings

### **Special Sessions & Panels**

- Organized and facilitated:
  - FISPN event
- Coordinated the return of Elizabeth Bonam to lead a moment of silence honoring victims and promoting nationwide peace.

- Recruited moderators for all concurrent sessions.
- New Conference chair will be introduced at the end of the conference when announcing the 2027 conference
- 2027 Conference Chair will attend the 2026 board meeting along with current chair to provide updates

### **Recommendations**

- At the start of 2027 conference planning, committee members are required to agree to a set meeting schedule as a condition of participation.
- Consider requesting that all conference committee members be able to attend the annual conference (3, potentially 4 out of seven are unable to attend the conference.
- Continue monthly check-ins with the ISPN Board to provide regular conference committee updates.
- This year, special advertisements were created and shared on social media for marketing and recruitment of sponsors/ exhibitors. Ideal to start marketing at the beginning of the conference planning



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# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Shaquita Starks and Freida Outlaw (Committee Co-Chairs)

### Summary of Activities:

#### Conference Presentation

The ISPN DEI Committee achieved a major milestone in 2025. In August 2025, the committee submitted an abstract for the 2026 ISPN Annual Conference. In November 2025, the committee was notified of acceptance for a **30-minute concurrent oral (podium) presentation** at the 2026 ISPN Annual Conference “Innovate, Integrate, INSPIRE: Charting the Future of Psychiatric Nursing,” March 18–21, 2026, Grand Hyatt Seattle Hotel. Session 7.1 | March 20, 2026 | 4:00–5:40 PM. Title: *“Reclaiming the Meaning of DEI: Advancing Equitable, Trauma-Informed, and Culturally Responsive Care.”* Panelists: Gaea Daniel (lead), Freida Outlaw, Shaquita Starks, Vicki Hines-Martin, Dawn Bounds, and Janet Passley-Clarke. Since December 2025 these DEI committee members have met weekly to prepare for the podium presentation.

#### 2025 Conference Poster Presentation – New Orleans

Members of the DEI committee presented a poster at the 2025 ISPN Annual Conference, New Orleans (March 19, 2025) titled *“Integrating Social Justice Principles Into Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Education and Practice in the U.S.: A Narrative Review.”* The authors were Drs. Starks, Bounds, Hines-Martin, and Outlaw. The poster authors experienced robust conference participant engagement. The submitted abstract was initially rejected for a podium slot but later was approved for a poster presentation. The DEI committee has since advocated for, and secured a designated future podium presentation slot. A reimbursement of \$71.30 for poster costs was requested, but to date, the reimbursement has not been received.

#### DEI Award

Dr. Dawn Bounds was the 2025 DEI Award recipient. She will, as the previous recipient, deliver the DEI keynote address at the March 2026 conference. The DEI committee discussed naming the DEI award in honor of a distinguished psychiatric nurse. This committee request will be presented to the ISPN Board for discussion and action. Gaea Daniel was nominated by the DEI committee for the 2026 ISPN DEI Award, however she was not selected.

#### Membership Growth

Seven new members joined in 2025: Chris Tresini (Washington State University); Elisa Stephens, PMHNP (April); Gaea Daniel, Emory University (March); Dr. Janet Passkey-Clarke (August); Thelma Ejimofor, PhD student, Johns Hopkins (September); Keisha Burrell, DNP student, University of Buffalo (November); and Dr. Denise Robertson, NYU (November). This growth reflects the success of rebranding and outreach efforts.

### **Partnerships and Collaboration**

Outreach for the 2026 Seattle conference includes connections with Chi Eta Phi (Dr. Outlaw), Dr. Fields of NBNA (Dr. Starks), and Seattle-area nursing programs at the University of Washington and Seattle Pacific University (Dr. Hines-Martin). A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with a Seattle-based organization is being pursued to support Goal #3. Dr. Hines-Martin joined the conference planning committee temporarily to align on DEI community outreach goals. Existing MOUs with organizations in India, Sri Lanka, and Japan were maintained. The committee also collaborated with the Policy Committee on a DEI position statement in response to a federal executive order.

### **Rebranding, Goals Review, and Community Outreach**

The committee expanded its DEI definition beyond race to include poverty, gender, disability, age, cultural differences, and LGBTQIA+ identity and more. Current committee goals are dated 2003; formal revision is planned following the 2026 conference, and the committee recommends that the bylaws be updated to include a regular review cycle. A business meeting is planned at the 2026 conference with Dr. Abelard. A paper on the meaning of DEI is planned for a nursing journal or newsletter. For community outreach (Goal #3), Dr. Hines-Martin is coordinating student attendance at the Seattle conference from the University of Washington and Seattle Pacific University, with particular outreach to the WAMI program (Washington, Alaska, Montana, Idaho).

### **Meeting Activity**

Monthly virtual meetings were held January through November 2025 (October meeting cancelled). Beginning December 2025, the committee transitioned to weekly working meetings to prepare the March 2026 podium presentation. A Trello task board was implemented to track all deliverables, working group assignments, handout submission (due February 19), and full panel practice sessions (February 1 – March 1, 2026). The DEI committee will continue to use the evolving science of DEI and how the science can be used to inform the work of ISPN.



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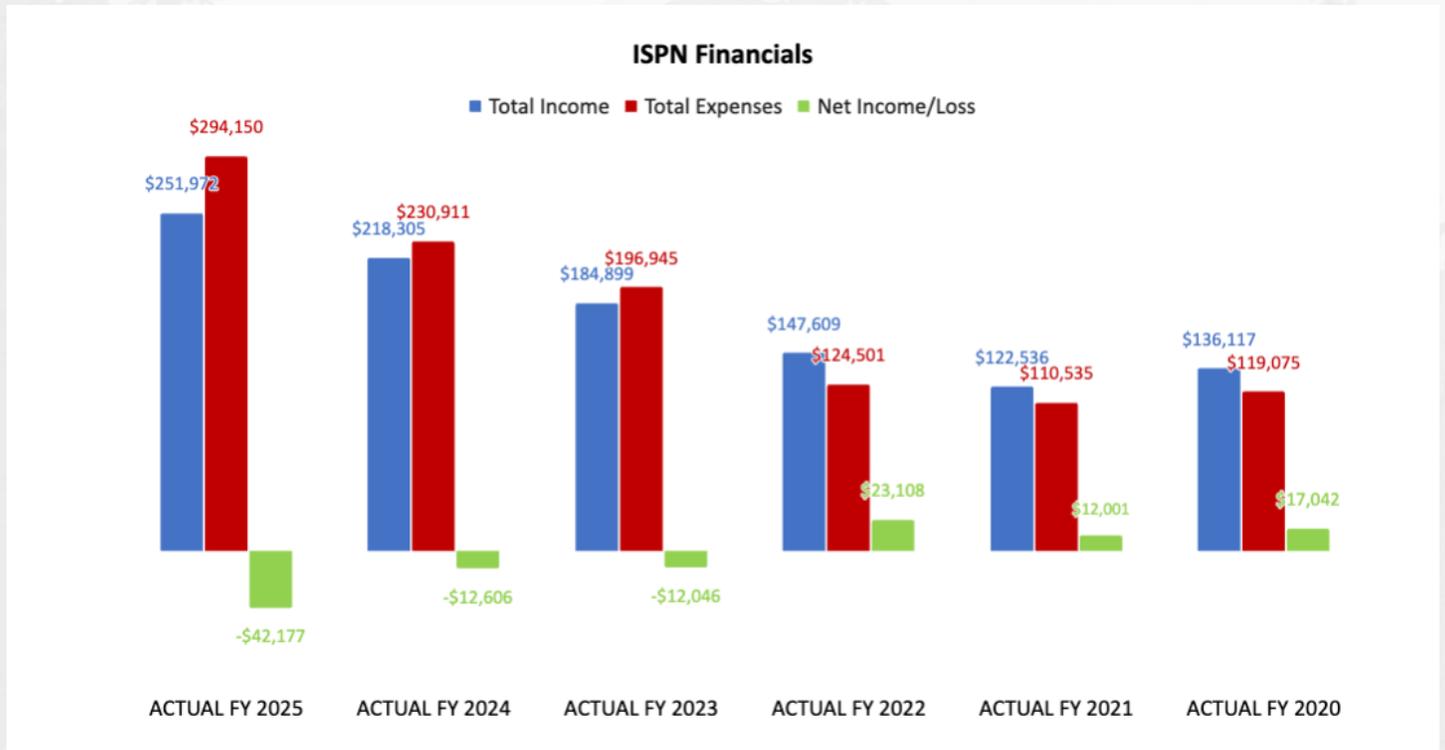
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## Finance Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Shawn Gallagher, Committee Chair

**Committee Members:**

Shawn Gallagher, Heeyoung Lee





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# Historical Archives Sub-Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Catherine Kane, Committee Chair

### **Committee Members:**

Catherine Kane (Chair), Caroline McKinnon, Julie Roebuck, Rene Love, Karan Kverno, Cheryl Woods Giscombe, Brayden Nicole Kameg

### **Summary of Activities:**

- We welcomed Brayden Nicole Kameg to the Subcommittee and are grateful to Dan Weseman for his service.
- We continued our collaboration with the UVA Eleanor Crowder Bjoring Center for Nursing Historical Inquiry.
- We continued to identify sources of ISPN materials and artifacts.
- Jess Ratzlaff (TRG) sent documents from 2015 for installation to the Bjoring Center.
- The Quik Link about the ISPN Historical Archives for the ISPN website went live this Spring!
- Dan Weseman and Julie Roebuck began implementing their grant funded by the Bjoring Center to obtain oral histories of Leaders in PMH Nursing.
- Sub-committee members staffed the Foundation Table and events during the 2025 Conference in New Orleans, LA.
- Due to having completed the goals established for the Sub-committee, a motion to conclude the work of the Sub-committee passed on 9/25/25. The members of the Subcommittee expressed appreciation for the group's work and to the ISPN Foundation for supporting this effort.



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# Membership Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Dina Fradkin Veytsman and Mary Louise Tatum  
(Committee Co-Chairs)

### **Committee Members:**

Dina Veytsman (Co-Chair), Mary Louise Tatum (Co-Chair), Barb Peterson, Lexxie Gramke, Marian Newton, Jummy Ojeleye, Elizabeth Hopfenspirger, Jennifer Reyes, Susan Glodstein, JoDee Hunter.

### **Summary of Activities:**

The Membership Committee convened on the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 PM EST throughout 2025, with the exception of January and July due to scheduled holiday breaks.

During 2025, the Committee successfully planned and delivered five continuing education webinars addressing timely and relevant topics, including suicide prevention and related digital interventions (2), cyberbullying, psychotropic medication management in children and adolescents, and adolescent substance use. These webinars were offered as part of ISPN's professional continuing education programming for both members and non-members. Planning for 2026 programming is already well underway, with four webinars currently scheduled and a fifth under consideration.

Regionalization efforts to enhance member engagement continued across five domestic regions and one international region. Marian Newton and Jennifer Graber served as Regional Co-Coordiators, providing leadership and oversight. Regional leaders convene annually at ISPN's Annual Conference and will continue this practice at the 2026 Conference to support collaboration, communication, and engagement across regions.

The Committee expanded its membership engagement initiatives during the past year, with several key efforts launched or in development. To better understand and address the needs of both domestic and international members, the Committee developed an Outreach Survey. Pending Board approval, the survey will be distributed to all members and promoted at the Annual Conference via a QR code. Responses will be analyzed by domestic and international status to identify perceived benefits of membership and barriers to participation.

Additional membership growth and engagement initiatives currently in progress include targeted outreach to faculty and program directors to support student sponsorship, development of a membership recruitment video (to include content collected at the 2026 Conference), and establishment of an ISPN Membership Committee booth at the Conference, staffed by Committee volunteers. These efforts are designed to enhance visibility, strengthen recruitment, and foster greater member connection to the organization.

Please see below for membership quantification updates for 2025.

**2024-2025****2023-2024****New Members**

Student	95	80
Full	130	70
Retired	7	5
<b>Total New Members this Month</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>155</b>

**Total Members**

Student	256	249
Full	378	357
Retired	52	49
<b>Total ISPN Members</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>655</b>



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# Newsletter Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Brayden Kameg,  
Editor-in-Chief of *Connections*, *ISPN Newsletter*

### Summary of Activities:

- The *ISPN Connections* Newsletter continues to publish three newsletters per year, focusing on providing ISPN members with relevant and timely information about ISPN and associated activities, such as the election, call for awards, scholarships and grants, the annual conference, and other continuing education events
- We've continued to collaborate with committee chairs to improve communication between ISPN leadership and the membership. Committee chairs continue to be queried before each newsletter, so that they can provide updates about their committee's work and relevant information for the membership
- The *ISPN Connections* Newsletter continues to serve as a forum for updates about the regionalization initiative
- The *ISPN Connections* Newsletter continues to be a means to disseminate relevant and timely information to the membership that might not otherwise be appropriate for the *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing* publication



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# Nominating Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Barb Peterson, Committee Chair

### **Committee Members:**

Rie Chiba, Shaquita Starks

### **Summary of Activities:**

This year we are pleased to report the following nomination results:

- President – Elect: One nomination
  - Elected: Gabrielle Abelard, DNP, APRN-BC, FAAN, FNAP, FAANP
- Director: Four nominations
  - Elected: Stephanie Wynn, DNP, PMH-BC, PMHNP-BC, FNP-BC, FAANP, FNAP
- Treasurer: Two nominations
  - Elected: Gaea Daniel, PhD, RN, PMHNP-BC



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# Regional Initiative Report

**Submitted by:** Marian Newton and Jennifer Graber,  
Regional Leader Co-Coordiators

### ISPN Regional Leadership

- **Midwest:** Elizabeth Hopfenspirger and Linda Jo Volness
- **Northeast:** Susan Glodstein and Jennifer Graber
- **Southeast:** Meira Yasin, Julie Roebuck, and Michaela Hogan
- **Southwest:** Janelle Jones, Brenda McKenna, Ellen Schimmels
- **West:** Jeff Ramirez and Pamela Minarik
- **International:** Amanda Baltierra

### Summary of Activities:

- Regional Leaders met in 2025 at the Annual ISPN Meeting in New Orleans as a Group and with members from their specific Regions.
- Regional Leaders also met with each other via Zoom in July 2025, October 2025 and January 2026.
- **Midwest:** Elizabeth Hopfenspirger and Linda Jo Volness
  - They meet quarterly with an average of 6-8 attendees.
  - New member emails inviting new members to Midwest Region meetings are being sent by the Region group as a method to connect with new members. They look at members in their region and use the member directory to get emails and send personal invites to their Region meeting.
  - DNP and other student projects include some of the topics presented at meetings in addition to support for all who attend.
- **Northeast:** Susan Glodstein and Jennifer Graber
  - Business of Region is conducted at the Region meeting. Additionally, speakers and DNP students have presented their projects at past meetings. We have continued to have speakers on topics of interest and continue to average 10-20 participants during the meetings.
- **Southeast:** Meira Yasin, Julie Roebuck, and Michaela Hogan
  - The process of holding a meeting and including both business meetings and a 20-minute program has been a format for this group.
  - The Region is looking to send a regional survey to determine interest.
- **Southwest:** Janelle Jones, Brenda McKenna, Ellen Schimmels
  - Found new co-leaders for this region.
  - The Region is looking to send a regional survey to determine interest.
- **West:** Jeff Ramirez and Pamela Minarik
  - The Region is looking to send a regional survey to determine interest.
  - They have had several meetings, but are looking to see what their region is interested in doing with the regional events.

- **International:** Amanda Baltierra
  - Working hard to find the process for International Connection.
  - Have increased international membership.
  - Currently reviewing the options for the international region to be divided into small groupings in relation to time zones.
- At the ISPN Conference Region Meeting, each region should set meetings for the year. Members present can add meetings on their calendars and send out communication, after the Conference, for upcoming Region meetings. This would serve as a reminder to those who did not attend (and a reminder for those that did).
- Preplanned dates for regional leader meetings in the months of March (conference), July, October, and January.
- Regional Leader Co-Coordinator was named – Jennifer Graber. This would be a 2-year term with the idea to change only one member each year.
- Currently working on Roles and Responsibilities of the Regional Coordinators and the Regional Leader Committee.
- The Regional Leader group overall agreed at each Region Leader meeting that they are making progress with their “Region process”, but change involved with developing “Regions” and establishing Region Meetings doesn’t happen overnight.
- We appreciate all leaders and hard work. Currently, there are co-leaders for each region and meetings and activities within the Regions are taking place. Regions are doing an amazing job!



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# Policy Committee Report

**Submitted by:** Pamela Galehouse, Committee Chair

### Committee Members:

Sally Raphel, Cynthia Handrup, Brayden Kameg, Beth Bonham, Pam Galehouse (Chair), Andrea Kwaski, Brayden Kameg (Board Liaison), Mitch Kordzikowski, Cynthia Paidipati, and Don Taylor

### Summary of Activities:

Federal legislation - We are in the second year of the 119th legislative session (Year 2025-2026):

- During the 119<sup>th</sup> session the number of bills introduced as of noon February 13, 2026 and their progress are as follows:
  - Total bills introduced = 17,963
  - Health bills = 1,723
  - Mental Health/SUD introduced = 899 (73 sent to floor by committee)
    - » Child/adolescent mental health = 41 (2 sent to floor)
    - » School mental health = 307 (33 sent to floor)
    - » Total signed into law = 7
      - ◇ Mostly related to appropriations and reauthorization

Collaborative activities with organizations including the *Nursing Community Coalition* (NCC), *Mental Health Liaison Group* (MHLG), *No Health without Mental Health* include attending monthly meetings and working collaboratively to support federal legislative activities of mutual interest. Examples of the nearly 70 collaborative activities with NCC and MHLG since the last conference include:

- All sixty-five members of the NCC signed onto a letter to the leadership of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee, urging them to consider and pass the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2025 (S.1874/H.R.3593) this Congress.
- In February 2026 signed on to support a MHLG letter endorsing the *Prevent Youth Suicide Act* (H.R. 5482), which will help provide consistent access to trained professionals, effective prevention programs, and coordinated support following a crisis by ensuring schools are better prepared to identify, support, and connect students in distress to appropriate care.
- In January, 2026 in a letter to leadership, the NCC commended Congress for passing the bipartisan fiscal year (FY) 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill, that restored funding to critical federal nursing programs.
- Signed on to MHLG coalition letter urging the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to ensure that implementation of the community engagement provisions included in H.R. 1 protects access to care for the millions of Americans living with MH/SUD that was sent on December 19, 2025.
- In November, 2025 joined together with sixty-three members of the NCC in signing onto a letter to House and Senate leadership, along with the members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, outlining the NCC's fiscal year (FY) 2026 funding requests and strong support for the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR). This includes

a request of at least \$303.472 million for Title VIII and \$197.693 million for NINR, as outlined in the bipartisan Senate Appropriations Committee-passed FY 2026 Labor, Health and Humans Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

- On October 31, 2025, joined with fifty-seven members of the NCC in signed onto a letter to the U.S. Department of Education, urging the Department’s Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) Committee to explicitly include post-baccalaureate nursing programs in the regulatory definition of “professional degree programs” when implementing the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R.1).
- On October 3, 2025 signed on to MHLG letter urging Congressional leadership to support the 988 LGBTQ+ Youth Access Act.
- Signed on in support of September 24, 2025 MHLG letter urging Congressional leaders to establish a 2-year or permanent extension of Medicare telehealth flexibilities.
- August 2025 signed-on to a MHLG letter of support for the Telemental Health Care Access Act (H.R. 3884), which would permanently eliminate the six-month in-person requirement for Medicare beneficiaries to seek mental health services via telehealth.
- Fifty-six members of the NCC signed onto written comments submitted on August 25, 2025 to the U.S. Department of Education urging them to consider the needs of our current and future nurses when implementing H.R.1, the One Big Beautiful Bill. In particular, the NCC requests that the Department classify post-baccalaureate nursing programs under “professional” degree programs.
- Signed on to July 2025 MHLG letter urging the House to protect individuals and families living with behavioral health conditions by rejecting changes to Medicaid within the budget reconciliation bill.
- Sixty-two members of the NCC signed onto the July 14 letter thanking the Senators and Representatives who introduced the bipartisan, bicameral Title VIII Nursing Workforce Reauthorization Act of 2025 (S.1874/H.R.3593), and urging its passage this Congress.
- Signed on to MHLG’s June letter urging the Senate to protect individuals and families living with behavioral health conditions by rejecting the House-passed changes to Medicaid within the budget reconciliation bill.
- Was one of sixty-three members of the NCC that signed onto written testimony submitted to the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education on June 4. The testimony featured the coalition’s funding requests of at least \$530 million for the Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development Programs and at least \$210 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), as well as preserving NINR as an independent Institute within NIH in FY 2026.
- Signed on to MHLG May letter of support for the COMPLETE Care Act. The legislation would improve access to timely and effective behavioral health care services by incentivizing primary care to adopt, implement, and progress along the integrated care continuum.
- Joined all sixty-four members of the NCC signed onto the May 6 letter urging Congress to take action on top appropriations and legislative priorities that impact nursing education, workforce, and research. This letter came as we celebrated National Nurses Week 2025.
- Signed on in support of April 3 MHLG letter to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, sharing support and urging action on H.R. 1735/S. 779, the EARLY Minds Act.

Developed the **Policy, not Politics: Advocacy for Change** remote sessions on policy for ISPN members in August, 2025, as a response to member concerns voiced at the annual conference in New Orleans:

- Prepared and facilitated 4 sessions over the fall months
- Extended collaborative sharing sessions into 2026 with a series of four remote sessions which began January, 2026.

Working collaboratively with Global Alliance for Mental Health and Social Justice our multidisciplinary partner to develop a living document, website-based, policy toolkit for mental health advocacy.

#### Outreach to members:

- Contributions to the Summer and Fall 2025 and Winter 2026 ISPN Newsletters, which included:
  - Reports on H.R. 1 impact on proposed removal of nurses from profession status, thus reducing federal loan ceilings for NPs, DNPs and PhDs;
  - the Congressional Nursing Caucus and its advocacy for nursing;
  - potential cuts for nursing education and nursing workforce
  - impact of projected Medicaid work requirements on states
  - changes in NINR, NIOSH and NIMH grants for mental health
  - advocacy efforts.
- eBlasts to members providing legislative information and advocacy opportunities including:
  - Prospective bills impacting nursing with guidelines to communicate views to legislators
  - Upcoming reconciliation bill that will allow changes in Medicaid eligibility
  - Suggestions for action to protest ED rule change reducing the amount of loan for nurses pursuing post-baccalaureate degrees

#### Policy statements and reviews:

- Completed and Board approved
  - Mental Health Care for Transgender and Gender Diverse Youth
  - Meeting the Psychiatric Needs for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- In process
  - Alternative Intelligence (AI)
- Being reconsidered
  - Dual-diagnoses assessment and treatment parity (joint project with *International Nurses Society on Addictions* [IntSNA])

#### Miscellaneous activities:

- Monthly committee meetings
- Responded to ISPN member applications for Policy Committee membership.
- Compiled/considered 2025 conference attendee MH policy suggestions
- Reviewed and responded to weekly Mental Health Liaison Digest Reports from MHLG and monthly notices from Nursing Community Coalition.
- Planned 2026 conference presentation