ADVANCED PRACTICE PROVIDERS COMMITTEE

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Sarah M. Enslin, PA-C, MS

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop and provide relevant educational and professional resources for Gastroenterology and Hepatology APPs.
2. Identify and address challenges in APP practice by sharing ideas, defining best practices, and presenting solutions that improve patient care delivery.
3. Increase APP awareness of, and active engagement with, the College.
4. Provide a forum for APPs in gastroenterology and hepatology to connect, collaborate, and network.
5. Promote and optimize the role of APPs to expand practice capacity, improve efficiency, and advance the quality of GI care.

COMMITTEE REPORT

The ACG Advanced Practice Providers Committee was established by the ACG Board of Trustees in 2018. The Committee was initially comprised of a group of ten members. By 2026, it has expanded to 38 members representing a wide range of practice settings and geographic locations. The Committee's work is supported by 5 subcommittees: Education, Awards, Mentorship, Practice Management, and Social Media & Member Engagement.

If you are an APP ACG member interested in joining the APP Committee beginning in the fall of 2027, visit the ACG website for more information: **gi.org/about/committees**.

Education Subcommittee

ACG APP Academy for Clinical Excellence (APPEx)

The primary goal of the Committee is to provide high-quality educational programs and practical resources that advance the knowledge, clinical skills and professional development of APPs in gastroenterology and hepatology.

The APP Committee, in collaboration with the Educational Affairs Committee and the Education Universe editors, launched the APP Academy for Clinical Excellence (APPEx) on January 2, 2026. APPEx is a first of its kind longitudinal learning platform specifically designed for APPs practicing in gastroenterology and hepatology. This enrollment-based comprehensive learning experience is designed exclusively for ACG APP members to support professional growth, demonstrate clinical competence, promote lifelong learning, and foster interprofessional collaboration.

The curriculum is made up of 36 modules comprising 161 on-demand lectures, featuring content from the original Education Universe APP Learning Modules, along with new ACG Guideline modules focused on the practical application of evidence-based recommendations in APP practice. Leadership modules from ACG 2025 were also recently added. In addition to educational content, APPEx includes a growing resource library with practical tools such as Toolbox articles, prior authorization letter templates and the Endoscopy Unit Manual. Future content will include an introduction to endoscopy curriculum designed specifically for APPs.

APPEx is designed to be flexible and scalable across a variety of practice settings. It can be incorporated into APP onboarding and fellowship programs, used as adjunctive learning in GI/Hepatology practices, or leveraged to obtain continuing education credit toward certification and licensure requirements. All content undergoes regular review and updates to ensure alignment with current clinical guidelines, emerging evidence and best practices.

APP Scholarship Program

ACG recognizes that limited CME funding can be a barrier for APPs wishing to attend the ACG Annual Meeting & Postgraduate Course. To help address this need, the College established the APP Scholarship Program, which awards a limited number of scholarships in the form of a stipend—up to $2,000 each—to support APP attendance at these events. Scholarship recipients must be an ACG member in good standing, a nationally certified nurse practitioner or physician assistant through their respective accrediting organizations and actively practicing in gastroenterology and/or hepatology with a minimum of one year of experience in GI and/or hepatology.

***Advanced Practice Providers Committee** (cont.)*

Congratulations to the 2026 scholarship recipients: Wynette Almeida, NP, Zohra Aziz, PA, MMS, DMSc, Catherine Brady, PA, Mary Clarke, NP, Leighanne Hartman, NP, Tara Hieger, FNP-C, Audrey Lastra, PA-C, Kathleen Morton, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, Jennifer Prebish, APRN-CNP, Ricardo Ruiz, NP, Jessica Samson, PA-C, Maribel Torres, MSN, FNP-C

Awards Subcommittee

NP/PA Award for Clinical Excellence
Established in 2022, this award represents an opportunity to recognize up to two NPs/PAs who are members of the College and have shown long standing contributions to advancing clinical practice, professional growth, and patient care. Nominations are reviewed by the APP Awards Subcommittee and forwarded to the ACG Awards Committee for final selection.

This year's recipient is Sandip Sall, DNP, NP-C.

Distinguished NP/PA Teaching Award
Established in 2024, the Distinguished NP/PA Teaching Award recognizes a distinguished NP or PA who has shown long-standing contributions to educating and mentoring APPs in the field of gastroenterology and/or hepatology. The recipient demonstrates excellence in mentorship, preceptorship, curriculum development and/or other educational activities that have a lasting impact on the profession.

This year's recipient is Lenore Lamanna, RN, EdD, ANP-C.

We encourage all ACG members to nominate an outstanding NP or PA for next year's awards. Full nomination guidelines for both awards can be found on the ACG website: **gi.org/about/awards/award-nomination-guidelines**.

APP Abstract Award
Created in collaboration with the Educational Affairs Committee in 2024, the APP Abstract Award recognizes excellence in research by NPs and PAs. Each year, one award of $1,000 is presented to the primary author of the top-ranked abstract submitted by an APP.

This year's recipient of the APP Abstract Award is Catherine Tambunan, FNP, "Structured Follow-Up Improves Adherence to App-Based Gut-Directed Hypnotherapy in a Medically Complex Tertiary Care Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) Population".

Mentorship Subcommittee

The Mentorship Subcommittee is committed to identifying and addressing the mentoring needs of GI APPs. Its mission is to support the professional and personal growth of APPs by fostering meaningful mentor-mentee relationships that extend beyond individual institutions and promote peer networking across the broader GI community.

To support this initiative, the Committee developed a dedicated mentorship landing page on the ACG website to provide program information and application materials: **gi.org/mentoring-program-apps**. Mentees are asked to select their preferred mentorship focus area during the application process, allowing mentors and mentees to be thoughtfully matched based on career stage, interests and professional goals.

For 2026, two cohorts were planned beginning April 15th and October 15th. The mentorship sub-committee reviews applications and matches participants into either 1:1 mentor or small group programs based on their stated preferences and availability. The April cohort included 17 mentees and 14 mentors, resulting in 9 mentorship pairings, consisting of both individual and small-group relationships.

The subcommittee plans to conduct informal check-ins throughout the mentorship cycle to monitor progress, gather feedback and provide ongoing support. A formal post-program evaluation will assess participant satisfaction, program outcomes, and opportunities for improvement. The Committee also aims to analyze and publish program outcomes to address the existing gap in the literature on structured mentorship programs for APPs in gastroenterology.

Practice Management Subcommittee

The Practice Management Subcommittee works to provide APP members with timely, practical guidance on practice operations, quality improvement, safety, coding, reimbursement and workforce optimization. In partnership with the Practice Management Committee, the APP subcommittee has published two toolbox articles. The first, "Incorporating APPs into GI Practices" is designed to help practices successfully recruit, onboard, and integrate APPs into gastroenterology care teams. The second, "Optimizing the Role of APPs in GI" explores strategies to maximize APP impact through role clarity, practice models, subspecialty clinics, productivity metrics, compensation, professional development, and future directions of GI APP practice.

In collaboration with the Education Subcommittee, the Practice Management subcommittee also organized the third annual APP Networking Lunch at the Annual Meeting in Nashville, entitled "Launching Strong, Leading Forward: From First Day to Future Leader in GI." This event is free for APP attendees and is designed to expand professional networks, foster mentorship and provide career development tools to support long-term career growth both within and beyond the clinical setting. The luncheon will feature a dynamic panel of six members representing diverse geographic regions, clinical environments, and career stages. Panelists will share insights into a successful transition into GI practice, recognizing opportunities for professional growth and leadership development, and practical approaches to building credibility and influence early in one's career.

Social Media and Member Engagement Subcommittee

The APP Social Media and Member Engagement Subcommittee aims to increase awareness of ACG resources and APP-related topics across various social media platforms, strengthen engagement among APP members, and create a venue for APPs to connect with colleagues nationally and internationally.

To support these goals, the subcommittee has created two online communities—the ACG GI APP Group on Facebook and the Advanced Practice Providers Working in Gastroenterology and Hepatology on LinkedIn. If you are an ACG APP member interested in joining the conversation with your colleagues via either group, please use the QR codes below:

Facebook Group:

LinkedIn Group:

In addition, the subcommittee hosts virtual social meetings designed to foster networking, share experiences, and build professional relationships among APPs across the country.

Other Projects

1. 2026 ACG Annual Meeting Planning: APP Committee representatives participated in the ACG 2026 Annual Meeting Planning Subcommittee meeting in January 2026.
2. ACG APP Resource Center: The ACG APP Resource Center, located under the membership tab on the main ACG website (gi.org/advanced-practice-providers) serves as a central hub for APP members. It features a monthly APP member spotlight, links to educational resources, training and fellowship opportunities, ACG member benefits and career opportunities, clinical guidelines, access to the GI Circles, professional development tools and patient education materials.
3. Quarterly APP Virtual Networking: APP Committee is developing quarterly virtual networking sessions designed to foster connection, collaboration and peer support among GI APPs across diverse practice settings, while expanding opportunities for member engagement beyond in person meetings.
4. 2026 Annual Meeting in Nashville – APP Lounge: Join us at the APP Lounge during this year's Annual Meeting in Nashville, where several networking events are planned, including opportunities to meet APP Committee leadership, connect with colleagues, and continue building the growing GI APP community.

Meet the ACG APP Leadership
Monday, October 12 | 10:30 am – 11:30 am

Join committee members and committee leadership in the APP Lounge for an informal Q&A exclusively for ACG APPs! Learn about different leadership trajectories and how involvement in the ACG and national organizations can bring fulfillment throughout your career.

APP Networking Hour
Tuesday, October 13 | 10:35 am – 11:35 am

Join APPs from all across the country for an informal network opportunity in the APP Lounge. Let's get together, share resources, and connect as a GI APP community! Led by the APP ACG Committee.