



The Wisconsin Society of Anesthesiologists (WSA) serves Wisconsin anesthesiologists, the general public, and elected officials as the resource on standards of ethical anesthesia care. We represent over 700 active members, 150 resident members from the two medical academic centers at the Medical College of Wisconsin and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as scientist and affiliate members.

What is an Anesthesiologist?

Anesthesiologists are medical doctors specializing in anesthesia care, pain management and critical care medicine, who have the necessary knowledge to understand and treat the entire human body. Anesthesiologists have a minimum of 12 to 14 years of education, including college, medical school, and residency, and often additional fellowship training that in sum amounts to 12,000 to 16,000 hours of clinical training. Anesthesiologists evaluate, monitor and direct patient care before, during, and after surgery. We deliver care, ensure safety and standards, and lead the Anesthesia Care Team (ACT) that may include anesthesiology fellows, residents, nurse anesthetists, and anesthesiologist assistants.

Treatment of Chronic Pain

Anesthesiologists specialize in pain control, and some of these physicians focus their practices on treating patients with chronic pain. Extensive training in Pain Medicine is requisite to develop this skill to minimize harm and maximize patient recovery and relief. Pain Medicine is a subspecialty involving many areas of interest and different medical disciplines. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) defines specific educational requirements for Pain Medicine fellowship programs and also recognizes the importance of distinct clinical training in anesthesiology, neurology, physical medicine, rehabilitation and psychiatry.

Top Legislative Issues

APRN Independence and Protecting Physician Titles from Misappropriation (Truth in Advertising):

WSA opposed legislation over the last two legislative sessions because both versions of the “APRN bill” lacked important experience and training components, as well as other necessary guardrails, and would have compromised patient safety.

The WSA, however, has worked towards compromise. While WSA always considers a physician-led team-based approach to all health care delivery the best way to provide quality patient care, we are encouraged to see AB 257. This new APRN bill includes at least four years of clinical experience; includes meaningful guardrails on pain management practice; and ensures transparency in healthcare by prohibiting the inappropriate use of medical titles by nurses, which will help patients make informed decisions on who is providing their care - especially anesthesia and pain management care.

Please contact WSA’s lobbying team, Hubbard Wilson & Zelenkova, at (608) 255-0566 with any questions.