



Office of Advanced Practice

FY20 Annual Report



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Message from Office of Advanced Practice

As we prepare this year's annual report, we would be amiss if we did not acknowledge that the world is confronting one of the greatest health threats of a generation, one that has profoundly impacted the global healthcare community and all of its citizens. Our thoughts remain with our Rush communities and our frontline heroes as they have been the most deeply hit by the COVID-19 crisis.

Throughout our history, Rush has built its reputation on its ICARE values, shared governance model and support of our communities in the most critical times. This unprecedented environment is no different. The actions of our Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) and our entire Rush community during this global crisis have been essential to keeping patients well and will be remembered for years to come.

Rush has weathered some unprecedented challenges, as we will with this current pandemic, but they did not stop us from accomplishing some extraordinary things. Once again, you should know how grateful and proud we are of our more than 400 APPs at Rush for all they have given in our time of need.

We entered this crisis in a position of strength and FY20 was another strong year for APPs. We look forward to what FY21 will bring and we know that APPs will continue to be an important part of the solution to this ever-evolving healthcare challenge.

Sincerely,
Jenn and Molly

Vision

Rush will be nationally recognized for Advanced Practice leadership structure which empowers advanced practice providers to transform the future of healthcare.

Mission

Rush's Advanced Practice mission is to provide exceptional, cost-effective, quality healthcare to patients, their families and their communities by creating innovative healthcare teams that increase patient access and improve outcomes.



Jennifer M. Orozco MMS, PA-C, DFAAPA

Director of Advanced Practice Providers

Assistant Professor,
Department of PA Studies
Vascular Surgery PA

Jennifer_m_orozco@rush.edu



Molly Erickson RN, MSN, ANP-BC, GNP-BC

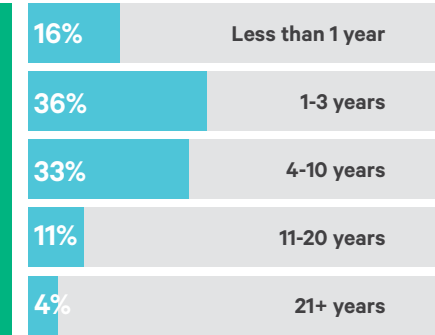
Director of Advanced Practice Providers

Palliative Medicine APRN

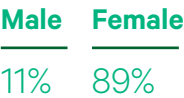
Molly_erickson@rush.edu

Rush Facts and Figures

Years of Experience



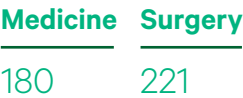
Gender



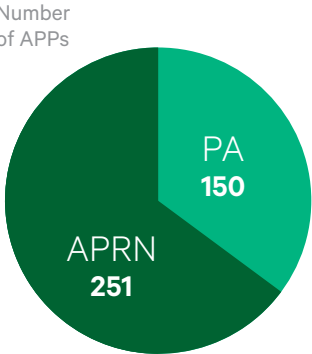
Employee Status



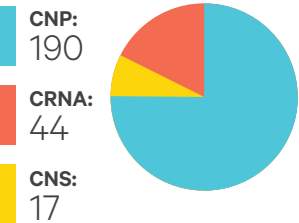
Specialty



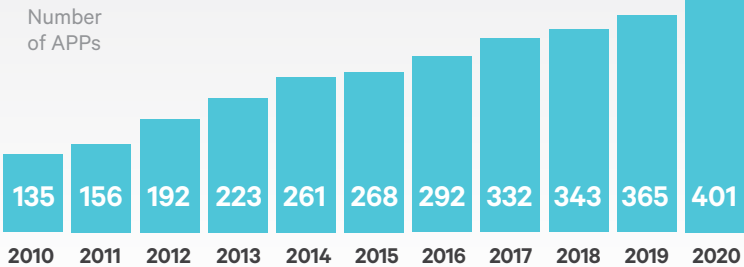
APP Breakdown



APRN Breakdown



APP Growth at Rush

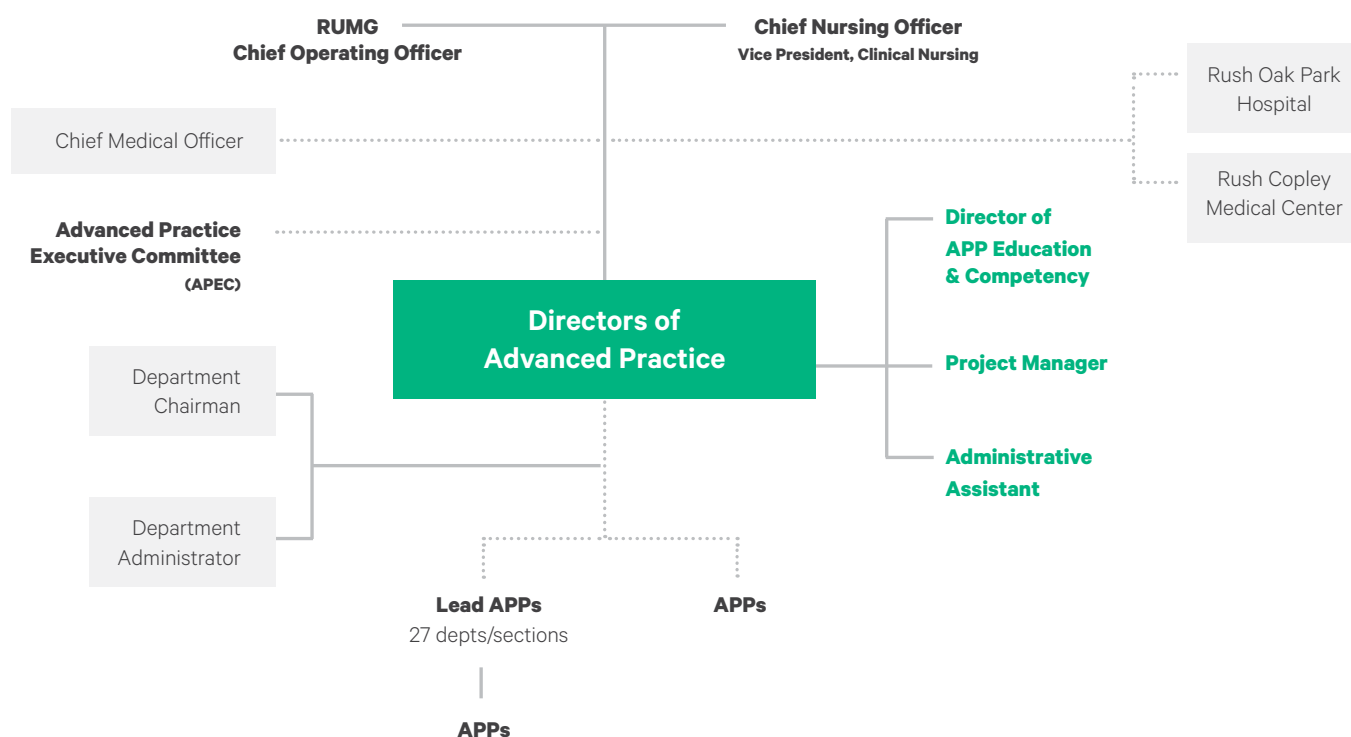


Neurosurgery APPs from left to right: Lauren Springer RN, MSN, AGACNP-BC, Jamie Bloechl RN, MSN, ACNP and Andrea Whedon RN, MSN, FNP



Elizabeth Nanney RN, MSN, PNP-BC from Pediatric Surgery

OAP Organizational Chart



APP Spotlights

Patient Access

Hematology-Oncology

Terri O'Brien MSN, RN, OCN, AGNP-C

Terri O'Brien has been an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) at Rush University Cancer Center for 22 years and has been an integral part in the Cancer Center's development of an Urgent Care Clinic in November 2016. The Urgent Care Clinic is primarily run by APRNs and serves patients from hematology, oncology, stem cell therapy, radiation oncology, and surgical oncology. APRNs collaborate with physicians, nursing staff, and ancillary departments, but still function autonomously within the Urgent Care Clinic.

The Cancer Center's Urgent Care Clinic is unique. Patients are cared for in a familiar environment where the Urgent Care APRNs maintain strong communication with the patient's primary hematology and oncology physician. The Urgent Care Clinic also provides convenience to patients that may need immediate care, without the hassle of visiting the Emergency Department. Additionally, the clinic acts similar to that of an Urgent Care or Walk-In Office, but with providers that are specialized in oncology. As a result, the clinic is able to help trouble-shoot decompensating patients in a timely manner.

A typical day in clinic can average 10 patients. If warranted, Urgent Care APRNs are able to directly admit patients, allowing patients to avoid long wait times in the Emergency Department. "Urgent Care APRNs are able to practice at the top of their license as they assess, order diagnostic services, diagnose and provide treatment during visits," says Terri. "Patients have expressed satisfaction in receiving quicker access to intravenous therapy, medications, and transfusions as well as comfort in familiar providers."

An ongoing initiative within the Urgent Care Clinic is the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Oncology Care Model. The model aims to improve supportive care with the goal of reducing Emergency Department (ED) visits and subsequent hospitalizations. An example of this was when a patient had been waiting in an ED for a prolonged period of time without care. "He ended up leaving the ED and coming to the Urgent Care Clinic where he was seen within 15 minutes, received infusions and transfusion and left feeling better and more in control of what was happening to him," says Terri.

All in all, APRNs within the Urgent Care help to improve patient access for hematology and oncology patients all the while reducing ED visits. ■



Telemedicine

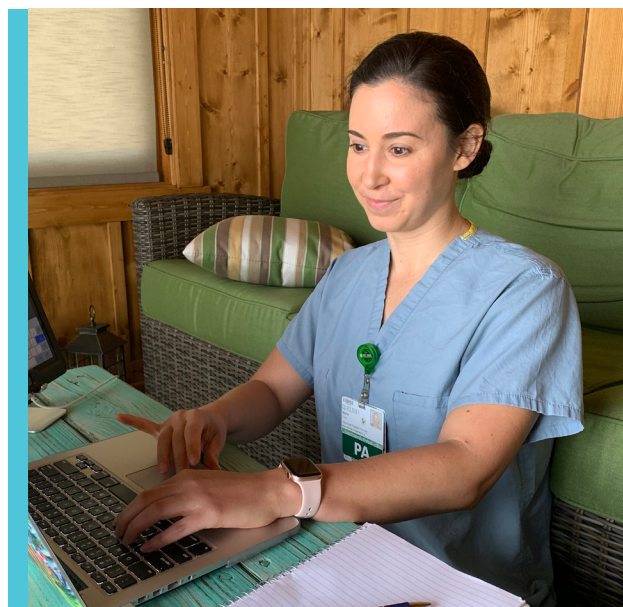
Maria Uhler, PA-C

Since the launch of Rush on-demand video visits in August 2019, Rush providers have enabled on-demand virtual care to patients suffering from mild symptoms such as cough, sinus complaints or other non-urgent illnesses.

Using MyChart or My Rush mobile app, patients are able to get a medical evaluation electronically from wherever and whenever. During FY19, 1,253 on-demand visits were completed by Rush's Emergency Department and primary care providers.

In March 2020, Rush added a COVID-19 specific module to expand access to care and free up inpatient and emergency room capacity. Over the course of the next three months, Rush APPs completed 1,546 COVID-related visits and 3,908 total on-demand video visits; a 32% increase from FY19 on-demand visits.

To support the growing request for on-demand video visits during COVID-19, 10 APPs were redeployed to video visits. Maria Uhler, a Physician Assistant (PA-C) for the Walk-In Care Center at Rush, was one of those redeployed APPs. Recognizing the importance of telemedicine, Maria says, "While telemedicine is currently the silver lining of the COVID-19 pandemic, being able to offer telemedicine effectively in this time has proven this tool will continue to have broader applications for patients beyond the COVID-19 pandemic". Ultimately, virtual care at Rush University Medical Center has increased accessibility to medical care in a way that patients may not have otherwise been able to receive. ■



Maria Uhler, PA-C taking on-demand video visits.

APP On-Demand Video Visit Facts and Figures during COVID Surge (March-May 2020)

**Patients
New to Rush
754**

Completed Visits

Total: 3,908

Adults: 3,862

Peds: 46

Top 5 Chief Complaints

Concern for COVID-19 1,546

Cough 485

Sore Throat 156

Return to Work 150

Fever 105

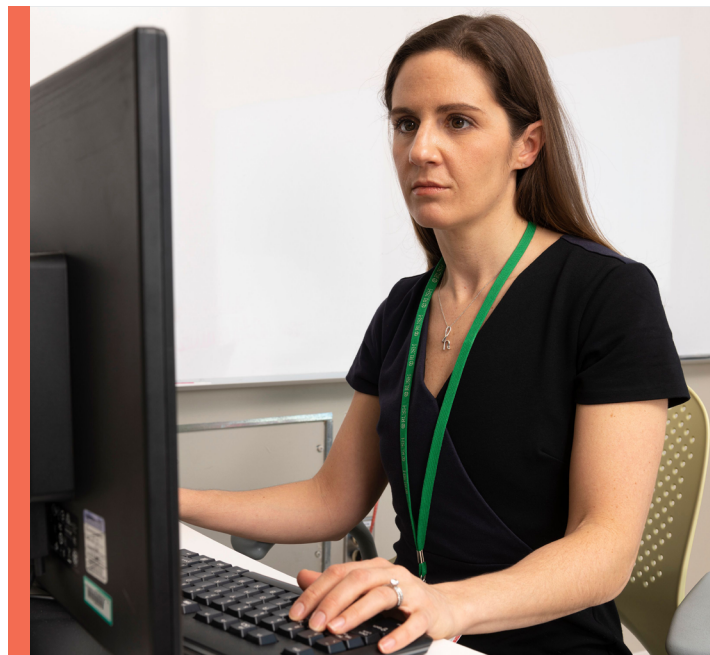
Clinical Outcomes

Psychiatry and Behavioral Health

Kathryn Perticone, APRN, MSW

Kathryn Perticone wears multiple hats at Rush University Medical Center: she is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, faculty for the Addiction Medicine fellowship, lead APP of Psychiatry and Co-Director of the interdisciplinary service, SUIT (Substance Use Intervention Team).

SUIT is an interdisciplinary consultation service developed to follow the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) model of care. In this new workflow, all patients admitted to Rush are screened by the admitting RN. If the RN's screening tests positive for alcohol and/or illicit substance abuse, then additional screening is completed by a LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) and followed by a SUIT inpatient consultation (and outpatient appointment whenever possible).



“By proactively screening throughout the institution, we are identifying patients who would have otherwise not received care and thereby decreasing the stigma associated with Substance Use Disorder (SUD).”

– Kathryn Perticone

Prior to the start of SUIT, opioid withdrawal was managed with non-opioid adjunct treatment. Kathryn says, “The use of methadone and buprenorphine for the treatment of opioid use disorder have been shown to decrease morbidity/mortality, decrease exposure to infectious disease, decrease incarceration and improve quality of life. By incorporating these drugs in protocol, we are decreasing barriers to accessing the medications.”

As COVID-19 brought on new challenges, Kathryn took on a new role supporting Rush's Wellness Initiative. The wellness response team is comprised of an interdisciplinary group of behavioral health providers, chaplains, and other specialists that conduct daily wellness rounds to ensure staff wellness remains a top priority. As part of the wellness response team, Kathryn helped establish wellness rounds, create respite rooms, and share information regarding wellness resources. One of underlying goals of wellness rounds is to emotionally support staff members through this unprecedented time. “We are really trying to reinforce the personal strength, resiliency and coping strategies that people already have,” says Kathryn. ■

Orthopedic Surgery

Maria Ferro PA-C, Julie Marusarz MSN, APRN, ACNP-BC
Kelly Pfeiffer PA-C, Erin Serrano MSN, APN, ANP-BC
Lauren Stribling DNP, MSN, ACNP-BC, Allison Terry PA-C

In 2019, Rush's Orthopedic Surgery service was revamped to create a Co-Management Model.

Prior to the co-management model, Orthopedic Surgery APP Maria Ferro says, “we recognized that when providers focused solely on the diagnostic or treatment aspect of their particular specialty, we were ill-equipped to reconcile that these things were only one component to the patient’s health.” To address these concerns, the co-management service was created where: a pre-determined set of patients would be seen by medicine, co-managing providers would communicate directly with patients and other providers, and roles would be defined to foster increased job satisfaction and accountability. Integrating the hospitalist service into orthopedic surgery’s co-management model has helped to closely manage patients’ comorbidities and thereby reduce the amount of patient readmissions based on non-surgical complications. Orthopedic Surgery APP Kelly Pfeiffer says, “With the addition of the co-management model, we are able to create a well-rounded care plan that provides the safest and most efficient care that keeps the patients from returning to the hospital for readmission.” Additional benefits of the co-management model include daily input and collaboration between teams as well as role clarity. Lead APP of

Orthopedic Surgery, Allison Terry, says, “Role clarity has made a big difference under the new co-management model. It holds people accountable, provides more open communication, and paints a clear picture of who to go to for questions.” Ultimately, Orthopedic Surgery APP Lauren Stribling believes “the co-management model has allowed us to better engage with patients and learn about all the factors that impact the health and wellness of each of our individual patients.” ■

“Role clarity has made a big difference under the new co-management model. It holds people accountable, provides more open communication, and paints a clear picture of who to go to for questions.”

– Allison Terry



Orthopedic Surgery APPs from left to right: Erin Serrano MSN, APRN, ANP-BC, Kelly Pfeiffer PA-C and Maria Ferro PA-C

Joy of Work

Megan Hawkins, PA-C

Specialty: CVT Surgery

Megan is the lead APP of Vascular and Thoracic Surgery and has been at Rush for almost 10 years. Throughout her time at Rush, she has worked in Vascular and Thoracic Surgery handling pre-operation and post-operation clinic, assisting the surgical team in the operating room and handling inpatient management.

After completing her education in Boston, Megan knew she wanted to work at an academic center; so when she was offered a job at Rush she knew it would be a good fit.

Megan attributes joy in the workplace to her team and close-knit department. “My team is extremely accessible to each other,” says Megan. “This helps promote continued growth and high-quality care.” The Thoracic Surgery department was rated a 3-star program by The Society of Thoracic Surgeons, which is only awarded to the top 5% of centers in the country. Megan says, “It’s an honor to work with this team while maintaining distinguished quality care. In addition to her close-knit department, she finds her continuous interaction with patients to be rewarding. One of the relationships she developed was with a patient she cared for after returning from maternity leave who made a growth chart for her newborn son. “It allows me to develop strong relationships with patients and their families,” says Megan. “Being on the front-end and meeting patients before, during and after their procedure is such an enjoyable part of my job.” ■



“My team is extremely accessible to each other. This helps promote continued growth and high-quality care.”

— Megan Hawkins

Vicki Shah, PA-C

Specialty: Solid Organ Transplant

Vicki is the lead APP of the Solid Organ Transplant department and has worked at Rush since 2016. Vicki's day to day includes outpatient work, inpatient rounding, offsite clinics, and research. In the midst of it all, Vicki finds joy in building relationships with colleagues and patients as well as learning new things.

Among her many roles, Vicki's involvement in professional organizations has benefited patients and colleagues alike. For example, Vicki's work with the American Liver Foundation has provided education opportunities for associates, Hepatitis C screenings for patients across Chicago, and patient education events. These experiences have helped Vicki foster deeper relationships with new and return patients alike. Most recently, Vicki has encouraged colleagues within the Solid Organ Transplant department to get involved. In doing so, Vicki has helped to expand colleagues' knowledge and careers all the while benefiting patients in the long-term.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Vicki took on a new role as the manager of the Emergency Department Ambulance Bay, which evaluated potential Patients-Under-Investigation (PUI) 24/7 while keeping them separate from normal Emergency Department operations. To ensure the Ambulance Bay team worked efficiently, Vicki quickly learned about ED operations, logistics, and supply needs. Doug Krysan was an APP redeployed to the Ambulance Bay and is a colleague of Vicki. "While directing providers in the Ambulance Bay, Vicki developed COVID workflows to ensure that providers staffing the bay had a standardized way to triage patients, place orders for testing, and document their encounters. She organized the Ambulance Bay schedule and provided us with ongoing support through the entire process," says Doug. "She was constantly checking in and quickly responded to messages or concerns regarding Ambulance Bay workflows or scheduling." ■



APPs in the COVID response



Above: Sheila Eswaran, MD and Doug Krysan, PA-C
in the Ambulance Bay

COVID Areas Staffed by APPs

Ambulance Bay
COVID Clinic & Drive Thru
Exposure Team
Hospital Medicine
Critical Care ICU
Lab Results Callback
On-Demand Video Visits
Wellness Team

In anticipation of the growing number of COVID-19 cases in Chicagoland and across the nation, Rush University System for Health stood up a Hospital Incident Command Center (HICS) and thereby a Labor Pool Command Center in order to coordinate providers, nurses and staff across the healthcare system. The Directors of Advanced Practice, along with the rest of the HICS leadership team, worked to identify which providers had the best knowledge and skillset to serve in the new COVID areas.

Allison Terry, lead APP from inpatient Orthopedic Surgery, was designated as the Director of the Labor Pool Command Center to oversee daily operations, managing the team, creating the staffing office schedule, coordinating communication with senior leadership and creating the team workflow. As the Director of the Labor Pool Command Center, Allison supported deployment efforts of over 700 providers and staff across more than 25 COVID areas. Allison's seamless transition from clinical to leadership role enabled the Command Center to run smoothly during this period of uncertainty.

In many instances, APPs with acute care backgrounds were able to be deployed to work in the emergency department, hospital medicine, or in new stand-alone Critical Care Intensive Care Units (ICUs) that cared for large COVID patient populations. Ryan Baldeo, a palliative care PA at Rush, volunteered to

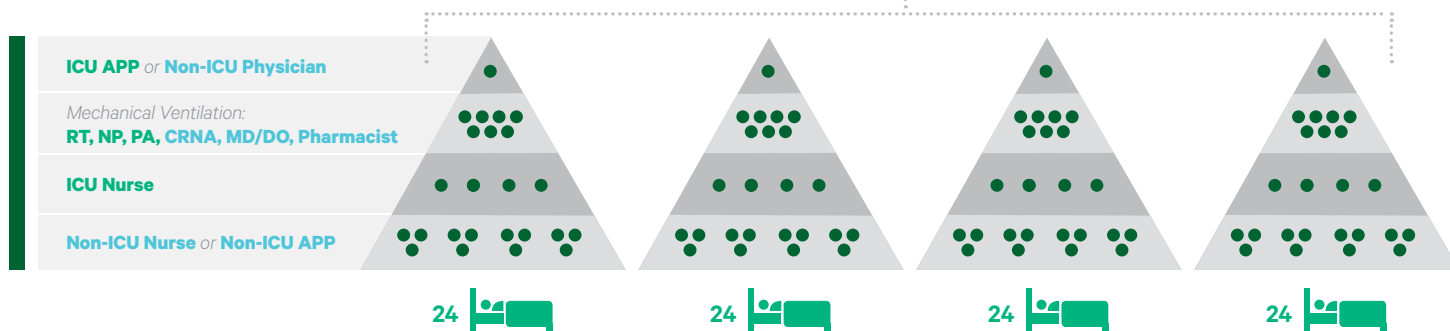
Tiered Staffing Strategy for Pandemic

Requiring Significant Mechanical Ventilation

RUMC adapted Society of Critical Care Medicine's (SCCM) Tiered Staffing Strategy for Pandemic as an effective strategy to incorporate non-ICU-trained staff of all disciplines (physicians, nurses, APPs and others [in blue] to greatly augment the trained and experienced ICU staff [in green])



Trained or Experienced
Critical Care Physician



help in early March. When the Office of Advanced Practice needed help elsewhere, Ryan stepped up to the task. Ryan was flexible and worked night shifts for the Ambulance Bay in March, then Hospital Medicine through April and May. “I have the skill set and I want to help where I can,” says Ryan.

Pediatric APRNs Jennifer Burke and Rona Tiglaio were instrumental in the organization and staffing of the pediatric COVID clinic. Since its opening, Jen and Rona worked to ensure all pediatric staff was trained on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the clinic workflow. Jen dedicated her time and effort to the pediatric COVID clinic all the while taking care of her pediatric patients in pulmonology. Rona was critical as an APP in the COVID clinic as well as staffing APPs to the clinic when employees began to get pulled back to their home department.

Sarah Savage, a PA with Gastroenterology, was quick to answer the call to serve during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sarah initially served in the COVID clinic during March

before getting deployed to Hospital Medicine in April and May. During this unprecedented time, she worked days, nights and weekends without hesitation. In Sarah’s healthcare hero nomination, her colleagues say, “Sarah’s patients are incredibly lucky to have such a dedicated and empathetic provider on their side”.

The redeployment of over 120 APPs showcased how versatile and flexible APPs are on the frontlines of the pandemic. Rush’s APPs highlighted their adaptability in moving to different specialties and units all the while taking care of patients from start to finish. ■

APPs

Redeployed APPs	122
Percentage of APPs redeployed	30%
Average APP duration of redeployment	54 days

Advanced Practice Executive Committee (APEC)

The Advanced Practice Executive Committee (APEC), led by President Erik McIntosh from 2018-2020, was established in 2018 at the request of the Directors of Advanced Practice to provide shared governance for advanced practice providers.

APEC membership consists of a diverse group of APPs across Rush including representatives from: College of Nursing, College of Health Sciences, medical departments, surgical departments, and representation from Clinical Nurse Specialists and Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists.

The committee operates a shared governance structure where there is shared ownership and accountability of clinical and professional practice at all levels. This model is different from other management models in that it incorporates a participatory style of management all the while striving to achieve the highest quality of patient care and professionalism.

In its first two years of establishment, APEC has finalized and obtained institutional approval of its bylaws as well as established standing sub-committees. Standing APEC committees include: Research and Quality, Recognition, Peer Review, Mentorship, and Nominating. ■



Erik McIntosh DNP, APRN, AGACNP-BC, APEC President from 2018-2020, speaks with colleagues.

2019 Award Winners



Ellen Elpern - Voice of the APRN Award

2019 Winner:

Deb Lynch, RN, BSN, MSN, SCRNP, APRN, Comprehensive Stroke Program

The Voice of the APRN Award is given annually to an APRN working at Rush who exemplifies the characteristics of leadership, commitment, and excellence in advanced practice nursing as demonstrated by our former colleague, Ellen Elpern, MSN, APRN. The award is presented each year during the Annual Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Week Celebration, which provides an opportunity to increase awareness about advanced practice nursing and celebrate the contributions that APRNs make toward continually improving patient care at Rush.



PA of the Year Award

2019 Winner:

Jessica Karl, PA-C, Neurosciences-Movement Disorders

The PA of the Year Award is given annually to a PA working here at Rush who demonstrates an exceptional work ethic, a dedication to professional service, is respected by peers and colleagues and of course demonstrates our Rush ICARE values. This award helps celebrate National PA Week from October 6th-12th when we recognize all of the exceptional things that PAs do every day for patients, their families and communities.



APEC President's Award

2019 Winner:

Katie McAndrews, MSN, APRN, ACNP-BC, Pulmonary Critical Care

The APEC President's Award recognizes an outstanding member of the APEC committee who has demonstrated dedication and commitment to Advanced Practice at Rush.

Rush Resources

Advanced Practice Provider Page insiderush.rush.edu/departments/APP
Medical Staff Services Office insiderush.rush.edu/departments/MSO
Provider Resources insiderush.rush.edu/resources/Pages/ClinicalResources.aspx
Rush University Medical Group insiderush.rush.edu/departments/rumg
Rush System for Health COVID-19 Updates insiderush.rush.edu/rushsystem/covid19/Pages/default.aspx

Contact Information

Office of Advanced Practice Office_Advanced_Practice@rush.edu
Advanced Practice Executive Committee APEC@rush.edu

Additional Resources

State of Illinois Practice Act Information

Illinois Nurse Practice Act tinyurl.com/IL-nurse-practice-act
Illinois PA Practice Act tinyurl.com/PA-practice-act

Professional Organizations

American Academy of PAs aapa.org
American Association of Nurse Practitioners aanp.org
American Association of Nurse Anesthetists aana.com
National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists nacns.org
Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing isapn.org
Illinois Academy of PAs illinoispa.org
Illinois Association of Nurse Anesthetists ilcrna.com



Excellence is just the beginning.