Current Concepts in Advanced Practice

Thursday, Dec. 3 and Friday, Dec. 4, 2026

VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM



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Course Overview

This national educational conference dedicated to advancing advanced pediatric practice is designed to meet the diverse needs of Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) and features four specialized learning tracks:

- **Acute Care**
- **Ambulatory & Primary Care**
- **APP Leadership & Management**
- **Informatics**

Attendees can customize their conference experience by selecting sessions aligned with their clinical interests, leadership goals, and professional development needs. A combination of expert-led educational sessions, interactive discussions, and innovative virtual programming provides a dynamic and flexible learning environment.

This comprehensive conference showcases nationally recognized speakers and timely content spanning the full spectrum of pediatric advanced practice. Sessions will highlight emerging clinical advancements, evidence-based patient care strategies, healthcare innovation, professional growth, leadership development, workforce optimization, and best practices for APP leaders and managers.

Beyond the educational program, attendees will have numerous opportunities to connect and collaborate with peers from across the country. Dedicated networking events provide virtual engagement opportunities and are designed to foster meaningful professional relationships and the exchange of best practices.

The conference also features a **Virtual Poster Hall**, showcasing innovative research, quality improvement initiatives, evidence-based practice projects, and clinical advancements from APPs and interdisciplinary teams nationwide. This interactive platform allows participants to explore poster presentations while discovering innovative approaches that can be translated into practice.

Participants will leave with actionable knowledge, expanded professional networks, and practical tools to enhance patient care, support organizational success, and advance their careers in pediatric advanced practice.

General Session Speakers

Clifton Thorton, PhD, RN, CPNP
Dr. Thorton is a Scientist at the Center for Nursing Research & Evidence- Based Practice at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, a Nurse Practitioner in the Division of Pediatric Oncology at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing.

Patrick Ahern, DNP, MBA, CPNP-AC/PC, CHPPN
Dr. Ahern is the APP Clinical Manager with the Center for Palliative Care at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and VitalTalk facilitator.

Gwenn Laragione, RN, BSN, CCM, CHPPN
Gwenn Laragione is a nurse coordinator with the Justin Michael Ingerman Center for Palliative Care at Children's Hospital of Philadelphi and VitalTalk facilitator.

Zachary Hartsell, DHA, FACHE, MPAS, PA-C
Dr. Hartsell is a Principal and APP Practice Leader at SullivanCotter, where he leads a national team advising health systems on advanced practice provider compensation, care team design, and workforce strategy.

Rachel Tkaczyk, MSN, MBA, CRNP
Rachel Tkaczyk is the Administrative Director, Physician Practice and Service Line at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

General Information

Choose the option that best fits your schedule and learning preferences:

Live Virtual Conference – $450 (General) / $300 (Students): Includes access to the live-streamed conference sessions, interactive presentations and continuing education credits.

Enduring Material – $700 (General)/$450 (Students): Provides access to recorded conference content from all four tracks for on-demand viewing and CEU credit only after the event concludes and for up to 6 months.

Full Access (Live + Enduring) – $600 (General)/$400 (Students): Enjoy the full experience with access to both the live virtual conference and enduring materials, from all four tracks, for maximum flexibility and value.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, participants should be able to:

- Increase knowledge of pediatric healthcare practices
- Integrate evidence-based practices into their clinical practice, resulting in improved patient care outcomes
- Engage in interdisciplinary collaboration, fostering communication and teamwork among interdisciplinary teams
- Gain insights into strategies for delivering patient-centered care, addressing cultural competency, communication skills and shared decision-making

Accreditation

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INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the healthcare team.

Designation of Credit

Nurses: This activity provides a maximum of 14.5 (Live) or 58 (Recording) ANCC contact hours, of which a maximum of 5 (Live) or 9.75 (Recording) are pharmacotherapeutic hours.

Physician Assistant: Children's Hospital of Philadelphia has been authorized by the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA) to award AAPA Category 1 CME credit for activities planned in accordance with AAPA CME Criteria. This activity is designated for a maximum of 14.5 (Live) or 58 (Recording) AAPA Category 1 CME credits. PAs should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia reserves the right to cancel or postpone any course due to any unforeseen circumstances. In the event of cancellation or postponement, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia will refund any registration fees, less a $75 service charge, but is not responsible for any related costs, charges or expenses to participants. To process refunds for course withdrawals, cancellation must be received in writing by Wednesday, November 25, 2026. No refunds will be issued thereafter.



PROGRAM

Thursday, December 3, 2026

Time (EST)	Acute Care	Ambulatory/ Primary Care	Managing APPs	Informatics
8:00 a.m. - 8:05 a.m.	Welcome & Introductions			
8:05 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Opening General Session: If We Don't Study It, Someone Else Will for Us: Research and AI for Advanced Practice *Clifton Thorton*			
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	**Breakout Sessions:** Bridging General Pediatrics and a Specialized Lymphatics Program: The Advanced Practice Provider Liaison Role *Ellie Marshall and Emily Penn* Finding the Balance: Pathway-Informed Delirium Management, ICU Liberation, and Patient Safety *Jessica Strohm Farber*	The Supplement Playbook: Evidence-Based Guidance for Pediatric Athletes *Kendall Grasela and Roni Robinson*	Raising the Bar: Supporting APPs as Leaders in Scholarship *Carolina M. de Almagro, Danielle Altares Sarik and Erin Hernandez*	Hidden Architects: Recognizing APPs as Informatics Leaders *Rhiannon Doherty*
10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Break			
10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	If You've Got the Poison, I've Got the Remedy: Novel Treatment Strategies for Common Pediatric Poisonings *Nadia Awad*	**Breakout Sessions:** Distinguishing Allergic Disease: How to Make the Diagnosis When Symptoms Fall Outside the Box *Elizabeth Hanna* Play Leads the Way... Coaching Parents Through Preschool Behavioral Challenges *Abigail Freeman* Heads Up! Recognizing Infant Head Shape Abnormalities *Afrodite Patounas and Allison Rodman*	Because APP Development Shouldn't Be a Secret: Building a Centralized Development Hub *Kaitlin Scarpaci*	Change Management Implementation *Kayla Mays*
11:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Break			

Thursday, December 3, 2026 (continued)

Time (EST)	Acute Care	Ambulatory/ Primary Care	Managing APPs	Informatics
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	**A Pain in the Neck: A Pathway Approach to Evaluation of Pediatric Blunt Cervical Spine Injuries** *Danielle Mascaro*	**Breakout Sessions:** **Growth Curves and Curveballs** *Denise Gruccio and Megan Lessig* **Nature as Medicine: Clinical Benefits of Nature Exposure and the Role of Nature Prescribing** *Megan Hood* **Eating Disorders: A Primer for Primary Care** *Caroline Shane*	**Better Together: Best Practices for APP-Physician Collaboration** *Nicole Washington, Sue Ogle, Katelyn Beam, Tara Dea, Craig Press and Katherine Lord*	**From Data to Decisions: Empowering APPs Through Data Literacy** *Genna Kreher, Jazreel Cheung, Sarah Bakke and Daniel Stranix*
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	**Lunch**			
1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	**Nutrition in the Critical Care Patient** *Sharon Irving*	**On the Right Path: Most Popular CHOP Clinical Pathways in Primary Care** *Cadi Foley, Jenna Jacobson, Jordy Martino, Leigh Foppert and Joshua Sperling*	**Leading Change: Building a Perioperative Nurse Practitioner Program from the Ground Up** *Elizabeth Kelly*	**Panel: Different Paths for Entry into Informatics** *Carrie Chan, Kristin Balmert, Lynda Hoeksema and Jacqueline Jones*
2:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	**Break**			
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions:** **Hormones on the Hospital Floor: Endocrine for the In-Patient APP** *Courtney Kivel, Megan Lessig and Sarah Limbach Cummings* **Use of Cangrelor in the Cardiac and Neurosurgery Populations** *Karla Resendiz and Ariana Powers*	**Breakout Sessions:** **Mind-Gut Interaction** *Laura Williams and Yunika Presson* **Integrating Lifestyle Medicine in the Ambulatory Pediatric Setting** *Renee Hammoud* **Early Autism Diagnosis and Management: A Primary and Specialty Shared-Care Model** *Amanda Bennett, Barbara Picard, Jennifer Keller and Judith Miller*	**Creation and Implementation of the APP Educator Role** *Megan Matiasek*	**Mentoring APPs in Informatics** *Amanda Ben Simon and Hyelim Park*
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	**General Session: Delivering Serious News Using the Vital Talk Framework** ***Patrick Ahern and Gwenn Laragione***			
4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	**Networking Session**	**Networking Session**	**Networking Session**	**Networking Session**

Friday, December 4, 2026

Time (EST)	Acute Care	Ambulatory/ Primary Care	Managing APPs	Informatics
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	General Session: APP Practice at an Inflection Point: Landscape, Leadership, and What Comes Next *Zachary Hartsell*			
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	Unraveling a Complex Overdose: A Case of Suspected Calcium Channel Blocker Toxicity *Kelly Piche and Amber Misra*	**Breakout Sessions:** Navigating Gene Therapy: Essential Knowledge for Primary Care Teams *Andrea O'Brien* Resurgence of Vaccine Preventable Diseases *Kira Kuhn and Lori Handy* Inclusive Communication with LGBTQ+ Youth: Practical Strategies for Clinical Care *Anna Kiesnowski*	Building an Advocacy Culture in Your Team *Katherine Thompson*	See It. Solve It. Sustain It. The APP Quality Improvement Journey *Christine Franciscovich and Patrice Forcine*
10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Break			
10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	Zero Harm, Healthy Kidneys: APPs Reducing Pediatric Nephrotoxic Medication Associated Acute Kidney Injury *Christine Franciscovich*	**Breakout Sessions:** Before DKA: Screening and Treatment in Early Stage 1 Diabetes *Pantea Minnock and Seema Meighan* Thinking Thyroid: Thyroid Management for the Primary Care Provider *Courtney Kivel* Pediatric Asthma Update for the Real World *Marcia Winston*	Identifying and Unpacking Provider Distress: Waving the Pink Flag Before It Becomes a Red Flag *Katie Behringer*	**Behavioral Health Informatics Across the Continuum of Care *(Sessions below to run consecutively)*** Residential Behavioral Health Workflow *Melanie Nelson* Engaging Patients with Risk Factors for Suicide in Ongoing Outpatient Care *Anne Kearney and Christina Procacci*
11:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Break			
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	**Poster General Session** Standardizing Universal Chlamydia Screening for Adolescents in Pediatric Primary Care *Christina Sweeney, Kimberly Bennett, Leigh Foppert, and Jennifer Beals* Compass Rose for Epilepsy Surgery *Dana LoTempio* Standardizing APP Professional Development Reimbursement *Dana LoTempio* Digital Coach: Unifying Clinical Teams and Providing Decision Support for Delivery Room Resuscitation *Elena Carrigan, Lauren Heimall, and Sura Lee*			

Friday, December 4, 2026 (continued)

Time (EST)	Acute Care	Ambulatory/ Primary Care	Managing APPs	Informatics
12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch			
1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.	From Chaos to Coordination: The APP's Role in Safe and Efficient Discharges *Sydney Lazar, Lauren Wisniowski, and Cynthia Alibrando*	Pediatric Dermatology for the Primary Care Provider *Sarah Mehlmann*	Investing in Those Who Teach: APP Preceptor Development Across Institutions *Emily Moore, Melanie Reynolds and Meredith Alley*	Panel: Paths to Leadership in Informatics *Casey Bor, Jennifer Merrill, Lia McNeely and Natalie Plachter*
2:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Break			
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions:** Diaper Dermatitis in Medically Complex Children: Targeted Strategies for APPs *Molly Stetzer* Demyelinating Diseases *Andrew Darvin and Jessica Zook*	**Breakout Sessions:** Pediatric Hypertension Updates *Kelsey Pearson* Supporting Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health in Developmental Pediatrics *Sarah Weas* Fever of Unknown Origin: Pediatric Infectious Etiologies *Kelly Ryan*	The Hardest Promotion: Managing People Who Were Your Peers *Ryan Skimmons Melissa (Missy) Garcia*	The Past, Present, and Future of AI in Healthcare — On the Leading Edge with a Pediatric APP *Gregory Lawton and Jennifer Yakupcin*
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Closing General Session: Leadership Resilience: Moving Intentionally in a Fast-Paced World *Rachel Tkaczyk*			

Unless otherwise noted, faculty is from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and/or the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

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