



# **National Association of Neonatal Nurses**

## **Chapter Leader Handbook**

### **Chapter Board Liaisons:**

Taryn Edwards, MSN CRNP NNP-BC  
EW: [Edwardsta@email.chop.edu](mailto:Edwardsta@email.chop.edu)

### **Chapter Staff Liaisons:**

Brendan Sugrue  
[bsugrue@nann.org](mailto:bsugrue@nann.org)

### **NANN National Office**

8735 W. Higgins Road, Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60631  
800.451.3795 • Fax: 866.927.5320  
[www.nann.org](http://www.nann.org) • [info@nann.org](mailto:info@nann.org)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>The Neonatal Partnership.....</b>	<b>4</b>
- Chapter Value	
- Chapter Resources	
- Chapter Requirements	
<b>Chapter Organization.....</b>	<b>6</b>
- Chapter Board of Directors	
- Chapter Officers	
o The Chapter President	
o The Chapter President-Elect	
o The Chapter Secretary/Treasurer	
<b>Chapter Governance.....</b>	<b>8</b>
- Chapter Board Meetings	
- Meeting Minutes	
- Chapter Committees	
o Standing Committees	
▪ Bylaws Committee	
▪ Nomination Committee	
▪ Membership Committee	
▪ Program Committee	
▪ Communications Committee	
- Committee Chairperson	
o Leading Committees	
- Committee Member	
<b>Managing Your Chapter's Finances.....</b>	<b>13</b>
- Record-Keeping	
- Tax-Exempt Status	
o Receipts under \$50,000	
o Receipts over \$50,000	
o State Tax Return	
o EIN	
- Income	
o Interest	
o Registration Fees	
o Membership Dues	
o Fundraising	
o Donations	
o Gambling/Raffles	
- Preparing a Budget	
<b>Membership.....</b>	<b>17</b>
- A Valuable Member Experience	
o Professional Growth	
o Community	
o Recognition	
o Leadership Development	

- Recruitment & Retention
  - o Recruitment – Ideas to Grow your Membership
    - Your Audience
    - Your Meetings
    - After Your Meetings
    - Your Members
    - Promotion
  - o Retention – Ideas to Keep your Members
    - Your Meetings
    - Your Members
    - Member Engagement
    - Networking
  - o Membership Tracking

**Programming..... 22**

- Program Ideas
- Continuing Education Credits

**Chapter Communications..... 23**

- Communications with your Members
  - o Printed Media
  - o Electronic Media
  - o Social Media
  - o E-Newsletter
  - o Web Site
- Communications with NANN National
  - o Dates to Remember

**Finding and Keeping Leaders/Volunteers..... 25**

**Resource Materials..... 26**

- Forms
  - o Annual Chapter Charter Renewal Form
  - o Mailing Labels

# THE NEONATAL PARTNERSHIP

NANN is proud to partner with groups across the nation to bring resources and encouragement to growing professionals in the neonatal nursing field. NANN values the reach and the impact that Chapters have in their local communities, as Chapters provide:

- Neonatal nurses with a means of networking.
- A forum for educational programs.
- An arena to foster leadership qualities.
- Encouragement to new graduates to enter neonatal nursing.
- Promotion of NANN.

## Chapter Value

Chapters in turn receive value from the partnership as NANN supports them in the following ways:

- Offers a group exemption that allows chapters to be recognized as tax-exempt organizations.
- Acts as the conduit for the formation of the chapter structure, which allows chapters to conduct membership activities, provide educational programs, foster professional development, and promote networking.
- Creates opportunities for chapter members to move into national leadership positions.
- Allows the use of the national organization's name & reputation.
- Provides Board of Director liaison representation as well as staff liaison assistance at national headquarters.
- Networking opportunities with other Chapters at the NANN Annual Conference.
- National recognition through Chapter Awards.
- Discounted conference registrations for chapters who submit their annual report on time.

## Chapter Resources

NANN equips Chapters with tools for easy administration:

- NANN Chapter Handbook.
- Complimentary website and hosting through Homestead.
- Private online community group for Chapter Leaders.
- Membership recruitment resources:
  - Mailing lists for recruitment efforts.
  - Labels of members in your state/s.
  - Monthly list of new NANN members in your area.
  - Literature such as membership brochures, sample newsletter and Journal.
- NANN table skirt available for use at local meetings.
- Quarterly Chapter Conference calls to network, gather ideas, and connect with other chapter leaders.
- Chapter Leader Mentoring - direct assistance from more experienced chapter leaders who are eager to help you.
- Complimentary chapter dues invoicing with quarterly fund disbursements to the chapter.
- Design of chapter logo.

## Chapter Requirements

In order to maintain this partnership chapters are required to fulfill the following:

- Hold at least 2 meetings per calendar year.
- Follow a fiscal year from January 1 to December 31.
- Complete an annual chapter charter renewal and submit it by May 15.
- At minimum, elect a president and secretary/treasurer.
- File an online 990-N tax report with the IRS, and provide proof of filing to the NANN office by May 15 each year.
- All members must be NANN members.
- Local dues cannot be higher than national dues.

Through this partnership, NANN counts on the power of the local Chapter to:

- Provide services and support to NANN members at the local level.
- Foster leadership qualities.
- Mentor leaders for national positions.
- Encourage new graduates to enter a neonatal nursing career.
- Provide an avenue to bring in national members.
- Keep the organization in touch with the grassroots of membership, to assess trends, concerns, changing needs, etc.
- Cultivate engaged members that can be tapped as national level volunteers.
- Contribute to a sense of community within the organization.
- Provide marketing channels for products and services.

# **CHAPTER ORGANIZATION**

## **Chapter Board of Directors**

The Chapter Board of Directors is responsible for the following:

- Supervising, controlling, and directing the affairs of the chapter.
- Selects the bank in which the chapters' funds are deposited, manages and disburses its' funds, develops and approves the annual budget, and complies with tax reporting requirements.
- Authorizes and monitors committees, reviews and evaluates projects.
- Develops and monitors chapter policies and procedures.
- Meets as often as needed, but at least twice per year.
- Submits annual chapter charter renewal to national office.
- Submits a list of new officers to national office within 30 days after an election.

## **Chapter Officers**

Chapters must minimally elect a President and a Secretary/ Treasurer. Alternatively, the chapter may decide to make Secretary and Treasurer two separate positions. It is strongly recommended that the chapter also elect a President-Elect to ensure that a President is in place for the next term.

### **The Chapter President**

- Supervises and directs chapter activities.
- Is responsible for ensuring that the board functions effectively, and that board members understand and adequately discharge their duties.
- Schedules meetings of the board, presides at all board and general membership meetings.
- Appoints standing and special committees, and appoints chairpersons.
- Act as the official representative of the chapter.

### **The Chapter President-Elect**

- Perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President.
- Serves as an ex-officio member of all standing committees.
- Is expected to succeed the President upon completion of the term as President-Elect or upon vacancy of the office of President.

### **The Chapter Secretary/Treasurer**

- Maintains all chapter records, including bylaws, financial reports, and minutes of board meetings, business, and committee meetings.
- Conducts official correspondence of the chapter.
- Distributes notices of chapter meetings.
- Maintains current committee and membership rosters.

- Generally serves as a standing member of the Communication Committee or any other appointed committee.
- Is responsible for the funds of the chapter and for keeping records of all income and expenditures.
- Deposits all chapter receipts in a bank account maintained in the name of the chapter.
- Render to the officers, whenever they request it, an account of all transactions as Treasurer.
- Prepares an annual financial budget for approval by the board and keeps the membership informed of the chapters' financial condition.

## **CHAPTER GOVERNANCE**

The organizational structure your chapter members choose will determine which individuals are empowered to serve as its leaders. Whether your leadership is restricted to four elected officers or is expanded to include elected At-Large Directors, these individuals are the ones ultimately responsible for chapter management. These general responsibilities include:

- Formulation of annual goals and objectives (including approval of the yearly chapter budget) to support a long-range plan of action for continued chapter development.
- Advisement, support, and evaluation of standing and/or special committees to ensure that their activities are in accord with their intended purposes and the educational and professional nature of the Association.
- Review and revision of chapter policies and procedures as necessary.

### **Chapter Board Meetings**

To carry out these activities, it is recommended that leadership meetings be held regularly as described in the Chapter Bylaws, with meeting dates established at the beginning of the fiscal year. Emergency meetings may be scheduled as necessary.

Below are suggested guidelines for effective board meetings:

- Give the board members adequate notice about meetings – three to four weeks prior to the date of the meeting is ideal.
- Develop a definite agenda complete with expected actions and incorporate a time structure so that the board spends only a certain amount of time on each item.
- Forward all pertinent agenda material to the board at least two weeks prior to the meeting/conference call. Make sure board members receive all information relating to an issue, both pro and con.
- Start the meeting on time. Assign an individual to take action notes.
- Make sure that actions and motions are stated clearly and completely. Clarify who needs to do what and when
- Only representatives elected by the general membership may vote on issues affecting chapter activities. When voting occurs, each representative is entitled to one and only one vote and all motions must be passed by a majority
- Encourage the participation of all board members but keep in mind that individuals often appreciate a leader who takes charge. It is important to hear from everyone on some issues, and effective to make quick decisions on others
- Review the board's discussions and decisions relative to the chapter's strategic plan
- Make sure that each individual taking the floor speaks clearly and audibly. Sum up what the speaker has said, entertain discussion, and obtain a decision
- Control aimless discussion by recommending a conclusion or further study
- Retain control, but don't stifle free comment. Ask for support. Clarify issues by obtaining consensus and then move on
- Check at the end of each meeting to see if members feel that all relevant subjects have been adequately covered
- Make sure that the action notes are distributed to the board within two weeks of the meeting or call



## Meeting Minutes

The purpose of taking minutes is to protect the organization and the people who participate in the meeting. The minutes are not intended to be a record of discussions, nor serve as a newsletter for the organization. The following guidelines will help volunteers and staff members take minutes that will protect the organization:

- Complete and accurate minutes need to be kept of every meeting, whether it is a meeting of the membership or of the board of directors. Best practice recommends minutes are taken at the committee level as well
- Minutes are a record of what was considered and accomplished at a meeting, not a record of each statement by those attending
- Minutes indicate the place, date and time of the meeting
- Include a statement that the minutes of the previous meeting have been distributed and were approved either as written or as changed
- The ultimate legal importance of meeting minutes can be substantial if antitrust, tax or other legal issues are raised in litigation or some other context
- Whenever appropriate, include self-serving statements about the procedures used by the organization to assure legal compliance. For example, “An antitrust avoidance plan was reviewed and implemented.”
- Early drafts of minutes, and notes used to make them, should not be retained in organization files once the final draft of the minutes is prepared and distributed. The chief elected officers must be sure they are discarded.
- Distribute copies of the minutes to those who attended the meeting and safeguard the records in the permanent files of the organization.

## Chapter Committees

### Standing Committees

During chapter formation, it is important to decide upon the standing committees that will support the purpose of the chapter and ensure their ongoing existence by identifying them in the chapter Bylaws.

The number of committees that may be formed is not limited, nor is a certain number required. However, it is recommended to establish standing committees based on real and ongoing need. When an objective or activity can be completed within one year and is not likely to be pursued annually, it is recommended that a **task force** be appointed rather than increasing the number of standing committees. Generally, a new chapter need only provide for five standing committees:

1. Bylaws
2. Nomination
3. Membership
4. Program
5. Communication

Each committee should have a chair that directs its activities, and a budget.

**Bylaws Committee**

The Bylaws Committee is responsible for the annual review of chapter bylaws to ensure their conformity with NANN Bylaws and the rules and regulations for chapters. The committee, with prior approval of the officers and/or Board, presents any recommendations for revision to the general membership for its vote. The President-Elect is generally a standing member of this committee.

**Nomination Committee**

The Nominations Committee is responsible for the development of guidelines for the election process, recruitment of nominees for office, and the development of a slate of candidates that will ensure representation by at least two institutions. They collect review materials from candidates such as CV, references, etc., submit slate of officers to the Board of Directors, prepare ballots, and compile results of balloting. The Immediate Past President is generally a standing member of this committee.

**Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee is responsible for the management of chapter promotion including the design and implementation of campaigns to recruit new members and to improve member retention. They can promote new membership through membership drives and by establishing contacts in hospitals, schools of nursing, and other health care agencies. The committee, in collaboration with the Secretary, is also responsible for the development of membership application forms and the maintenance of membership records.

**Program Committee**

The Program Committee is responsible for developing and promoting education programs for its members. When possible, continuing education credit should be secured for the educational offering or conference. They also make all logistical arrangements for educational offerings and programs. The chapter President-Elect is generally a standing member of this committee.

**Communications Committee**

The Communications Committee is responsible for the preparation and release of information regarding chapter activities and topics of concern in the neonatal field. This is typically achieved by the publication of a chapter newsletter. The chapter Secretary is generally a standing member of this committee.

*A model form for chapter bylaws is provided in the resource section of this handbook.*

**Committee Chairperson**

Regardless of the number or type of committees chosen, each must establish its own written policies and procedures including member qualifications, terms of service, and duties and responsibilities. The general duties and responsibilities of a committee chairperson are outlined below:

- Have charge and full knowledge of all activities of the committee
- Annually confirm committee membership with the approval of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors
- Provide for the orientation of each committee member

- Give notice, arrange, and preside at all meetings of the committee
- Designate a recording secretary to keep the minutes of all committee meetings
- Submit quarterly reports and meeting minutes for review by the Executive Committee or Board
- Attend all regularly scheduled leadership meetings as called for by the Chapter organizational structure
- Communicate with and report activities to the Chapter Communications Committee
- Maintain an accurate record of and monitor all committee expenses
- Annually prepare and submit to the Chapter Treasurer a financial statement and committee budget request for the following fiscal year
- Be responsible for keeping and annually reviewing the committee policies and procedures and other guidelines for committee activities
- Devote sufficient time to consistently fulfill the duties of the position of chairperson
- Perform other duties as may be requested by the Executive Committee or Board.

### **Leading Committees**

A results oriented committee chair will set goals, objectives, and activities that can make a membership, newsletter, fundraising, or any other committee an effective tool for the chapter. When action steps and accountabilities are clearly defined, individual committee members are much more likely to take their personal responsibilities seriously, and make sure the job gets done. Consider the following steps in developing action plans for committees:

- Set specific quantifiable goals for the committee to achieve. For example: *This year we will increase membership by 10%*
- Define the specific activities you will undertake to accomplish your goals. For example: *We will personally invite nonmember nurses to at least two chapter activities during the year*
- Make sure your activities fit within the budget allocated for the committee
- Give specific assignments to individuals and set deadlines to make sure the job gets done. Make sure tasks are a reasonable amount of work for the individual they are intended, and that they have a start and an end date. For example: *Individual "X" will post fliers at 3 area facilities for 3 continuing education meetings this year*
- Assess your progress. Have you met your goals? If not, were they realistic? Are there other courses of action that may assist you in achieving the goal for next year?
- Recognize your volunteers and celebrate your successes. Make sure everyone feels good about the job they have done. For example, *publish an article in your newsletter about the committee's accomplishments, present a plaque to someone who went the extra mile, write thank you letters to all volunteers, phone committee members to personally thank them for their work.*

Keeping members engaged in committee work by setting up programs that have clear and attainable goals with specific assignments and due dates is one way to help insure that your chapter retains enthusiastic, involved members.

## **Committee Member**

The function of the committee will, in large part, dictate the number of committee members necessary to carry out its work. The most effective committees typically have three to five members (including the chairperson). The actual number should, however, be jointly determined by the Executive Committee or Board and the committee chairperson and documented (along with member qualifications, terms of service, and duties and responsibilities) in the committee policies and procedures. The general duties and responsibilities of a committee member include the following:

- Perform assigned tasks in a timely manner to facilitate the orderly progression of committee business
- Maintain contact with the chairperson to ensure a viable, productive committee
- Participate in committee evaluation and future planning
- Attend all regularly scheduled committee meetings
- Devote sufficient time to consistently fulfill the duties of the position
- Perform other duties as may be requested by the chairperson and the Executive Committee or Board.

## MANAGING YOUR CHAPTER'S FINANCES

### Record-Keeping

Adequate record-keeping reflecting chapter history, policy decisions and financial health should be maintained. The chapter leadership has a responsibility to the members to maintain the fiscal integrity of the organization. To assist your chapter in organizing its records and maintaining financial information, the following procedures are recommended:

- Maintain a permanent file with the following information:
  - Chapter bylaws
  - EIN number (Employer's Identification Number)
  - Chapter minutes in chronological order
  - Record of chapter's financial transactions
  - Quarterly financial reports
- Chapter financial records should be maintained for at least 7 years. This is the same length of time that your personal financial records should be kept in case there are any questions from the IRS.

### Tax-Exempt Status

NANN is organized as a non-profit, tax-exempt professional organization under section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code and section 23701e of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. For the benefit of its chapters, NANN also has a Group Exemption. The exemption recognizes chapters as subordinate groups of the national organization and gives them tax-exempt status as well. Some states require a tax return to be filed even if the chapter is included in the Group Exemption. Each chapter should check with their local IRS office.

The most common misunderstanding about a tax-exemption is that it exempts the Association and its chapters from all taxes. However, this is not the case. Tax-exempt status means only that the Association and its chapters do not pay federal tax on income from activities that are directly related to the organization's purpose; education.

However, if income is generated by an activity unrelated to the organization's purpose, the chapter MUST pay tax on that income. Such "unrelated income" includes money received from garage or yard sales, bake sales, raffles, and the sale of promotional items, even if no profit was realized. In order to conduct such sales, Chapters must:

- (1) Obtain a certificate of registration from the Sales & Use Tax Division of their State Department of Revenue
- (2) File Sales and Use Tax Reports and pay the tax due. If the unrelated business income is more than \$1,000, the chapter must also file a federal tax form 990-T. Chapters who receive "unrelated income" but fail to report and pay sales tax in an appropriate and timely manner may not only be required to pay penalty and interest on that sales income, but risk having their tax-exempt status revoked.

#### **Receipts UNDER \$50,000:**

If the chapters' gross receipts are \$50,000 or less, an annual electronic notice, Form 990-N, must be submitted to the IRS by the chapter. The submission of the 990-N is free of charge and is submitted online. In order for a chapter to be eligible for the group exemption, they must have

gross annual receipts less than \$50,000, and the following must be included in their annual chapter charter renewal to the national office:

- A current copy of bylaws
- Officers list including contact information
- EIN Number

**Receipts OVER \$50,000:**

If the chapters' gross receipts are over \$50,000, a paper tax return, Form 990 must be submitted to the IRS. IRS forms can be printed from the IRS website at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

In the unlikely event that a chapter's gross receipts exceed \$50,000 per year, the chapter should file a Form 990EZ (Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax).

**State Tax Return:**

Generally, the chapter will not need to file a State tax return. However, chapters should check with their individual states, as requirements may vary.

**EIN:**

All chapters are required to have an EIN number for tax purposes or bank accounts. If your chapter does not have one, call your local IRS office to get one. Additional information about obtaining an EIN can be found on the following IRS webpage:

[www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=97860,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=97860,00.html)

## **Income**

In order to maintain financial viability, the chapter can explore all potential sources of income.

**Interest:**

As a non-profit organization, you are entitled to open an interest bearing bank account. Establish a reserve account as soon as feasible to begin building a financial nest egg that will help underwrite chapter growth.

**Registration Fees:**

Make all meetings, seminars, luncheons, dinners, and educational programs self-supporting so that a budget deficit is avoided.

**Membership Dues:**

All chapters should set their dues amount that is charged to members, in order to offset expenses. Dues should be reasonable, but also provide funds necessary to run the chapter. NANN Chapter Dues are collected by the National Office and then directly deposited into the Chapter's bank account quarterly.

**Fundraising:**

This is an area where you can be creative – have bake sales, solicit sponsorships and grants, sell ad space in your newsletter, charge non-members higher fees, have raffles or auctions.

**Donations:**

Many chapters solicit and receive donations from corporations and other sponsors to launch and support their activities. While no restrictions exist to obtaining such funds for the chapter, those donations are not deductible by the donors as charitable contributions as defined in section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Gambling/Raffles:**

A number of chapters have sponsored raffles at their meetings as a means of generating income. Since many state laws prohibit gambling, a raffle's validity will depend on the gambling laws in the state where the raffle is held. Before planning raffles, contact your Representative at the state level.

## Preparing a Budget

A budget is a valuable tool to help plan the upcoming year. It provides a structure to forecast and measure the activities of the organization. Once a budget is approved and implemented, it becomes a standard with which to measure the chapter's performance on a monthly, quarterly, or yearly basis. In addition, a budget can provide an early warning if adjustments in spending or revenue collection are necessary.

The work on an upcoming budget begins before the current year is completed. The following steps will guide you through the initial phases of budget development:

- Specify the financial goals of the chapter. The goals might include:
  - Long term goals, such as building a reserve equal to one year's expenses.
  - Functional goals, such as making a 10% profit from the annual conference.
  - Short term objectives, such as purchasing a computer.
- Select the specific categories of expenses and revenues for the budget.
- Compare and analyze the current year's budget with actual results to date and an estimate of year-end results.
- Discuss the upcoming year with chapter officers. Additionally, develop the chapter budget with input from the various committee chairs. Will there be any significant changes in the number of meetings, meeting locations, new programs, additional newsletters, etc.
- Review the budget line by line to determine potential additions or deletions.

Once you know which budget items will continue, and which need to be changed, you are ready to prepare your budget for the next year. Various sample budgets are provided for you in the resource section of this handbook, but here are some practical ideas to consider:

- Start with fixed or predictable budget items. Examples: *Mailing activity will increase by 3% and the post office will increase the price of stamps by 10%.*
- Know your chapter's history. For example, *if membership has decreased by 5% in the last 2 years, you would build that expected decrease into the dues revenue budget.*
- Document your efforts. Prepare notes or schedules that explain the rationale behind budgeted numbers when feasible. These explanations will help you review financial performance during the year, as well as develop subsequent budgets. Save your notes for future officers.

- Seek experienced help. For example, *vendors can provide estimates for printing, meeting rooms, etc.*
- Marshall Support. Involve chapter members who make decisions that carry budget impact. This involvement brings responsibility and accountability to the budget.
- Get budget approval. Once the budget is completed, it's best to get it approved by the officers before the start of the New Year.
- When the budget is implemented, compare it with actual results on an ongoing basis (monthly or quarterly). If you find variances between actual and budgeted results, determine the underlying reasons. If the variances are significant enough to affect year-end results, inform the officers as soon as possible to afford the opportunity to change plans if necessary. Document variances so the information can be taken into account when planning next year's budget.
- Budgets should be retained for a 3 year period.



# MEMBERSHIP

## A Valuable Member Experience

The most traditional motivator for joining a professional association is to contribute one's support to a common voice and mutually shared goals. Additionally, the importance of tangible benefits grows as another strong motivator. As you assess your membership recruitment and retention strategies it is important to keep both motivators in mind while you work toward establishing a valuable member experience.

Chapters can thrive when they focus and capitalize on their members' needs for professional growth, community, recognition, and leadership development.

### **Professional Growth**

Members seek to become successful within their profession and, for some, within leadership positions in the chapter as well as the Association. Your chapter can be instrumental in providing opportunities for your members to gain the tools and resources they need for that growth.

### **Community**

Community is the result of your group's shared vision, values and goals. A great community is best developed through positive communication and networking opportunities which create a sense of belonging.

### **Recognition**

Celebrating the efforts and talents of your members by establishing an award and reward program fosters community, gives professional credit to the member and motivates others to become more engaged. Incentivizing member efforts and announcing accomplishments also demonstrates collaboration.

### **Leadership Development**

Leadership opportunities keep members interested, motivated, and energized to carry out the work of the chapter while ensuring its longevity and avoiding burn-out by seasoned leaders. Identify, evaluate and groom your members for leadership growth with the perspective that the ownership of the chapter ultimately belongs to all members.

### **Valuable Member Experience**

The ultimate goal is to create a valuable member experience that nurtures the professionals within your chapter and that will ultimately lead to growth of the chapter through increased membership retention and recruitment. Below are practical and proven recruitment and retention tips that will help you achieve this goal.

# Recruitment and Retention

## Recruitment

### Ideas to Grow your Membership

#### Your Audience:

- Know who you are recruiting:
  - *Nursing students*
  - *Internationals*
  - *Pain management, MD*
  - *Pharmacy reps*
- Identify and target your audience connections:
  - *Hospitals*
  - *Universities*
  - *Schools of Nursing*
  - *Doctors Office*
  - *NANN members that do not belong to a chapter*
  - *Former chapter members*
  - *Associate members (Allied health professionals)*
  - *NNP's in your area who are not members.*
- Maintain a current database of members, former members, potential members, allied colleagues and local industry representatives. Utilize NANN's list & label resources to maximize the reach of your communications
- Adopt a high school and promote nursing to graduating seniors
- Ask nurses from several hospitals to present grand rounds. They will bring their support systems (other nurses) and you can recruit them
- Co-sponsoring an event with a local association of allied professionals has the potential to increase your member base
- Sponsor chapter information booths at local recruitment days
- Arrange to go to local institutions to meet with and discuss the benefits of belonging to NANN
- Give nurse managers a supply of national and local brochures
- Videotape a meeting and show it at different institutions
- Bring "snacks" and information to institutions
- Invite head nurses to a meeting and supply them with brochures
- Develop a speaker's bureau. Offer these to head nurses in exchange for time to present information concerning NANN
- Assist head nurses with the development of participation in NANN as part of the staff nurses' performance appraisal.

#### Your Meetings:

- Have a sign-in list at the door with a monitor to ensure the names and contact information of attendees are captured
- Always use name tags at meetings to refresh memories of who is who
- Assign greeters to welcome guests
- Use stickers to identify new members and prospective members
- Stock a table at your meeting with membership applications, educational brochures and issues of past newsletters

- Offer contact hours at every appropriate gathering
- Schedule innovative speakers and publicize your meetings
- Sponsor a social event like a holiday party to encourage networking and recruiting
- Recruit during educational events or annual chapter conference
- Position NANN membership as a plus for the clinical ladder
- Offer discounted conference fee for new members
- Use a dynamic, known speaker as a drawing card.

#### **After Your Meetings:**

- Connect with a personal touch: a phone call, a face-to-face meeting individually or within a group, a handwritten note
- Send a personal thank you to non-members who have attended meetings
- Plan follow up contact with guests and non-renewing members in a timely manner
- Look at what you offer for local membership: local membership card, CEU's, networking, professional growth and expertise, etc. Make sure you can give specifics, people expect "something" for the money.

#### **Your Members:**

Encourage and equip your members to communicate the value of membership to others:

- Have a contest to see who can bring in the most members
- Provide incentives like gift certificates and free registrations to members who recruit new members
- Develop talking points for members to share with potential members. Plan how to respond to the following statements:
  - *It costs too much - point out what they get in return \$1/week*
  - *I'm too busy - too busy to improve their career or profession*
  - *I'll decide later - when and then as the time approaches - call them*
  - *I don't want to join now - invite them to a meeting with no pressure to join*
- At the close of the meeting ask members to share the names and contact information of three colleagues who would have benefitted from the meeting. Add these names to your contact list
- Ask members to personally invite at least three colleagues via a handwritten letter accompanied by the symposium brochure/registration form
- Designate members as liaisons to relevant institutions in your region
- If the institution is their professional home, they should:
  - Ensure an Association promotional poster is posted
  - Provide membership information to new employees
  - Get names and contact information of new potential members
  - Follow-up with fellow employees with lapsed memberships: *"What did we miss?"*
  - Discuss support of the Association with visiting industry representatives
- If the institution is not their professional home, they should plan for periodic visits to the institution to execute, as best they can, the items listed above
- Offer a social hour at a meeting that attendance is earned by bringing a guest

#### **Promotion:**

- Advertise in state board newsletter, or hospital newsletters
- Mail educational fliers to local facilities and schools
- Develop a prospect packet for distribution

- Promote your meetings in newspapers, TV Channel, medical or special newspaper, and Board of Nursing Newsletter.

## **Retention**

### Ideas to Keep your Members

#### **Your Meetings:**

- Have a drawing for meeting attendees offering a free chapter membership
- Rotate meetings at different facilities
- Provide a door prize for meeting attendees
- Create a sign-up sheet for refreshments at meetings to involve more people.

#### **Your Members:**

- Create good communication with your members
- Conduct a survey via phone, mail or email to evaluate members' needs of and satisfaction with the chapter, and then fulfill them
- Tell people who are not active chapter members that you still appreciate their support
- Announce meetings well in advance. If possible, develop an annual calendar of activities
- Foster a sense of ownership to the members...the chapter belongs to them.
- Assess why members leave
- Check the efficiency of the way meeting notices are sent and the correctness of addresses of members
- Develop and distribute a local membership directory
- Send out membership and renewal form with your newsletter
- Announce & recognize accomplishments in newsletter and at chapter meetings
- Apply for chapter awards to celebrate you're accomplishments at the national level.

#### **Member Engagement:**

- Get your members involved; first with small tasks then expand
- Develop a point system for participation
  - Chapter projects
  - Community projects
  - Research projects
  - Chapter news for publication
  - Committee work
- Groom potential leaders
- If you ask for volunteers, make sure you involve them
- Have clear time frames and deadlines
- Continually recognize member's contributions.

#### **Networking:**

- Network and combine meetings with other chapters
- Sponsor a community action drive for more face-to-face time among members
- Establish a buddy system, pairing longer term members with new members. It keeps the established member engaged and reinforces the importance of the chapter while offering a great benefit to your newer members, a resource
- Arrange tours of new facilities.

## Membership Tracking

On an annual basis, track the number of renewals versus the number of new members. These figures will assist you in knowing if your recruitment versus your retention strategies need more attention.

- $(\# \text{ Renewals} / \# \text{ Expected Renewals}) \times 100 = \text{Retention Rate (\%)}$
- $[(\# \text{ New Members} - \# \text{ Lapsed Members}) / \# \text{ Expected Renewals}] \times 100 = \text{Growth Rate (\%)}$

For healthy overall growth in your chapter, your retention rate should be between 75-80% and your growth rate between 3-5%. Set these as your goals and refer to this document as you develop your annual membership recruitment and retention plan.

*Membership Reports will be made available quarterly from the NANN National Office*

## PROGRAMMING

Professional growth is the key value of membership. Providing educational opportunities for your members will sustain your chapter and contribute significantly to the field of neonatal nursing.

### Programming Ideas:

- Plan for at least one yearly all day symposium with continuing education credit.
- Be creative in planning meetings (holiday parties, non-nursing speakers, lawyer, financial planner, beauty makeovers, car mechanics, etc)
- Have fun! Socialize!
- Offer a 60 minute (6 ten minute slots) for exhibitors to show their wares... "What's New in Technology" and charge them to be there and present (or at least pay for refreshments)
- Locate people in your area that presented at the annual conference: Presentations are already prepared, and they're familiar with the organization.
- Update your CEU application forms.
- Write a thank you note to all speakers with feedback on their presentation. Keep their CV on file.
- Have several presenters on one topic. It could include one speaker from each facility in your area.

### Continuing Education:

- For a list of accredited organizations that approve CE, please visit <http://www.nursecredentialing.org>
- South East Florida Chapter is an approved provider of CE through the Florida Board of Nursing.

# CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

## Communication with Your Members

Communicating with your chapter is key to delivering value and building community. There are several ways to engage and connect with your members using various communication tools:

### Printed Media:

- Distribute a newsletter. Plan for quarterly distribution at a minimum

### Electronic Media:

- Develop an e-mail distribution list. Collect members' e-mail addresses and retain them regardless of their membership status
- Notify members periodically about upcoming meetings, conferences, fundraisers, etc.

### Social Media:

- Become social! Create a social media page that communicates and celebrates your efforts to the public and encourage member participation on topics.

### E-Newsletter:

- E-Newsletters are a cost-effective way of sharing news with members (current, former, and prospective) and other interested parties such as industry representatives
- Be sure to include a "Forward to a Friend" option.

### Web Site:

- NANN offers the opportunity for you to create your own website, free of charge through Homestead.
- When thinking about the content of your site, be sure to provide pertinent information on the value of membership, your programs, and contact information.

## Communication with NANN National

As an entity of a larger, national organization it is important to regularly communicate with your NANN staff liaison. We are available to answer your questions and support your chapter. It is also a relationship that requires responsibility. Below are dates to remember that maintain your chapter status and build upon the partnership between local and national.

### Dates to Remember:

#### January

- Gather information from chapter officers for the NANN annual chapter charter renewal.

#### May

- Apply for the Chapter of the Year and Individual Project Awards. Winners receive cash prizes, and recognition at the Annual Conference. The application deadline is May 1.
- IRS online 990-N due May 15.
- NANN annual chapter charter renewal due May 15.

**June**

- NANN and NANNP annual election of officers.

**July**

- Abstract submission for NANN Conference opens at [www.nann.org](http://www.nann.org).

**August**

- Notify the NANN office about attendance at the Chapter Leadership Luncheon at the annual conference.
- Submit a photo in the Faces of Neonatal Nursing Photo Contest that portrays the spirit of neonatal nursing with a short description. Photo submission deadline is August 1.

**September**

- Neonatal Nurses Day- September 15.

**October**

- NANN Annual Conference.

**Ongoing**

- Send accomplishments and other news-worthy items for NANN's E-News in the "Chapter Spotlight" section.
- If your officers change during the year, or if an officer's address or other contact information changes, please notify us within 30 days.



## FINDING AND KEEPING LEADERS/VOLUNTEERS

Leadership is one of the main ingredients to a robust chapter. Motivating and preparing your members for leadership will enhance your chapter's performance and reach. Here are some ideas for cultivating leaders and volunteers:

- Have a clear outline of what your leaderships' responsibilities will be
- Be clear about how long a commitment is required. Make some commitments short term, and project oriented.
- Be open to innovation and creativity.
- Make sure your meetings are well organized and planned ahead of time.
- Recognize and appreciate volunteers' efforts. Acknowledge accomplishments and provide feedback.
- Include others whenever you can in order to promote a sense of community and spirit.
- Ask others to participate – they may be reluctant to volunteer, but willing once asked.
- Reward board members with free chapter conference registration and/or reimbursement for NANN conference fee.
- Offer free membership to members who demonstrate excellence in fund raising.

## RESOURCE MATERIALS

The following resources can be found on the Chapter web pages of the NANN website,  
[www.nann.org](http://www.nann.org).

### FORMS

[Annual Chapter Charter Renewal Form](#)

[Table Skirt Request Form](#)