

Introducing Yourself

By Anne Hletko, PA-C

I have a standard line that I use whenever I enter an exam room: “Hi, my name is Anne, I am the physician assistant working with Dr. Wilson. “ I say this (or a slight variation) regardless of whether I have met the person before or not. With this introduction, there is never any doubt about who I am or with whom I work.

The importance of this introduction was made very clear to me recently. I received a call from a retired NP. She called for an appointment for her husband the next available appointment with a PA. The PA, when entering the room, did not introduce them or indicate that they were a PA. She knew the person who was examining her husband was not a physician and was livid that the PA did not introduce them or indicate their title. Mad enough to call WAPA and express her opinion. She contended that the PA was misrepresenting themselves as a physician by not introducing themselves and indicating their title or clarifying when she asked. Now this might seem a little extreme and could be chalked up to an NP who resented a PA treating her husband, but I think the situation highlights an important part of our lives as PAs.

Identifying who you are is very important. It is a part of the Physician Assistant code of ethics.

Professional Identity

(39) Physician assistants should not their skills, training, professional assistants should uphold the dignity ethical values.

misrepresent directly or indirectly, credentials, or identity. Physician of the PA profession and accept its

It is also part of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. The title of physician, MD, DO, etc is protected by this code. Physician Assistant is also protected.

(3) USE OF TITLES(e) No person as a “physician assistant” or use or or append to the person’s name assistant” or “P.A.” or any other represents or may tend to represent unless he or she is licensed as a

may designate himself or herself assume the title “physician assistant” the words or letters “physician titles, letters or designation which the person as a physician assistant physician assistant by the board.

When I chose Physician Assistant as my career, I gave long, hard thought to the fact that I was going to be a dependent practitioner. Despite all the baggage that dependency brings, I felt that the benefits outweighed the problems. I made my choice with my eyes wide open and continue to believe that it was the best decision I ever made. I am too

proud of who I am as a PA to introduce myself as anything else or allow anyone to think I am anything else but a PA. enah, WI 54956