



News & Notes

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Jennifer Madonia-Barr, PA

President-elect of CT Academy of Physician Assistants Became a PA for Love of Science, Medicine and People

Danbury Hospital recognizes its staff of 58 physician assistants (PA) during National Physician Assistants Week October 6 to 12. In this issue of *News & Notes*, we feature **Jennifer Madonia-Barr, PA**, of Connecticut Neck and Back Specialists, and President-elect of the Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants.

What is your background? *I studied chemistry as an undergraduate then worked as a chemist for Bayer Corporation before returning to graduate school. I received my Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies from Beaver College in Glenside, PA, in 1999. I have been practicing as a PA for 6 years. I have worked in the*

Emergency Department as well as a neurosurgical PA. For the last three years I have worked as a surgical PA concentrating primarily in spine surgery. I joined Connecticut Neck and Back Specialists in January of this year.

What attracted you to becoming a PA? *Simply, my love of science, medicine and people.*

Describe how you and your physician(s) work in partnership. *I work closely with Dr. Kramer at CT Neck and Back Specialists. I see patients in the office, assist in the OR and care for patients in the hospital. Dr. Kramer and I work effectively as a team and that allows us to plan and coordinate the best care for our patients. While I function autonomously, I know when I need to consult with my supervising physician.*

How do you impact quality, access, and safety for patients? *My availability helps patient access. Often times, I'm the first provider a new patient will see in the office. I may initiate a work-up, make the diagnosis or explore treatment options with the patient. I believe it's essential to take the time to help patients understand their diagnosis and manage their expectations about what the outcome of their treatment will be. I also believe in fostering patients' ability to get better by empowering them to take part in their own health care.*

What satisfactions do you get from being a PA? *I'm proud to work in a community where PAs are well recognized and respected in terms of the quality of care we deliver and where we enjoy high patient acceptance. PAs truly are an integral part of Danbury Health Systems.*

You are now President-elect of the Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants. What are your plans? *As president-elect, I have been charged with creating and chairing a Council of Committee Chairs. The goal is to identify how the ten committees within the organization can work together more effectively.*