

2021 House of Delegates Report

Like most things over the last year and half, the House of Delegates Meeting was unlike any other if for no other reason than it was the 1st completely virtual full House of Delegates meeting. The 2020 House of Delegates meeting was abridged and primarily related around the Title Change Investigation (TCI) with the majority of resolutions deferred until a planned in person 2021 conference in Philadelphia. Unfortunately, the in person 2021 conference was also cancelled due to the current worldwide pandemic and essentially 2 years of HOD business was left to be conducted in a completely new format.

The 2021 House of Delegates meeting despite being 100% virtual was overall a success and I am interested to see how the AAPA handles future business now that it has been shown to be able to conduct business that previously was not felt to be able to be performed in a virtual setting. The conference was not ideal in some ways because there is much to be lost in person-to-person interactions when you are unable to see and interact with your fellow delegates but in some ways the experience was more inclusive and open due to the ability to include some delegates and individuals that may not have been able to attend an in-person meeting/conference due to finances or personal health among other reasons.

There were many topics debated in the 2021 Virtual House of Delegates meeting with both success as well as failure but the elephant in the virtual room was definitely the discussion/debate over the title change of our profession. This was a very heated discussion/debate as could be imagined with the ultimate decision to proceed with a title change to Physician Associate which would also keep the credential of PA. From the OAPA Title Change Survey, there were a total of 290 responses. 56% of respondents were in favor of a title change with an overwhelming majority of 81% in favor of the title Physician Associate. Oklahoma was not alone in favoring this title over some of the other choices if we indeed were going to agree to change the title. The Oklahoma delegation voted in favor of a title change and change to Physician Associate in accordance with the Title Change survey.

There were multiple other hot button issues like there are every year which often are indicative of current issues in the interest in the year leading up to the conference. Some of those issues included Racism, Excessive force by law enforcement agencies, Cannabis use as well as Pornography as a Public Health Crisis. There were also a number of resolutions involving Diversity, Equity and Inclusion which has been a topic of conversation all across the United States in recent years.

As always, I am grateful to be able to represent the Oklahoma delegation and will continue to do so as long as the Oklahoma PAs see fit. These reports are only ever a snapshot and often difficult to fully relay everything that happens during any House of Delegates Meeting but hopefully it will give you an idea. I hope everyone has a safe and educational conference! Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to help or questions that I might be able to answer. I have also attached the copy of the OAPA Title Change Survey results as well as the 2021 House of Delegates Summary of Actions in case anyone wants to review the actions in more detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Burke". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "B".

Phil Burke PA-C, MBA, RHIA
Oklahoma Chief Delegate 2020-2021
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