



## **ADHD Discussions from the American Psychiatric Nurses Association's 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

*By Jennifer A. Ganem MS, APRN*

This October, psychiatric nurses across the country gathered in Long Beach, California to attend the American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA), Annual Conference. The atmosphere was celebratory and attendees were eager to learn about new advances. Many discussions were taking place in one of my areas of specialty, adult attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

### **Multiple Facets of ADHD**

Four major presentations on ADHD were given at the APNA Annual Conference – one for each day of the event, and all very well attended. As a paid consultant on behalf of Noven Pharmaceuticals, and in support of their ongoing efforts to engage the ADHD community, I was pleased to deliver a presentation titled, "A Different Perspective in Adult ADHD", which discussed potential positive attributes related to ADHD.

The presentation covered a range of topics, including: how common ADHD is in adults, how adult ADHD typically presents, positive attributes associated with adult ADHD and finally, managing and treating adult ADHD.

I believe this session was engaging and proved an interest in learning about a different way to view ADHD among mental health professionals. Even with the wealth of existing knowledge surrounding the condition, there was an appetite to understand more. Based on evaluations, 95% of attendees stated the presentation was useful to their practice and exceeded their expectations.

### **ADHD Conversations Throughout APNA 2022**

Discussions on adult ADHD at the conference were not limited to the presentations; in fact, some of the most engaging conversations on the subject took place organically between mental health practitioners on the floor of the conference's exhibit hall.

I personally found myself conversing with fellow professionals on numerous ADHD topics; however, one clear overarching takeaway was the all-encompassing impact of COVID-19 on the ADHD community and the growth in adult ADHD diagnosis rates likely being due to improved diagnostic practices as opposed to isolation.

As many nurses and Advanced Practice Nurses have been unable to attend in-person learning opportunities like the APNA Annual Conference, this was the first chance in several years for many to engage directly with colleagues. As a result, there was an excitement among attending professionals.

### **Two Years On, and It's Good to Be Back**

All in all, I could not have been more pleased to be back among my peers in person. Over four exhilarating and highly informative days, I learned a great deal about the well-documented, but often-misunderstood condition that is adult ADHD, and about the professionals who have dedicated their careers to caring for people with ADHD.

I was honored to partner with Noven as they continue to affirm their commitment to people living with ADHD. Noven will continue to be intimately involved in key industry events like the APNA Annual Conference, and I look forward to witnessing how they utilize these forums to engage with the broader ADHD community.

*Jennifer A. Ganem MS, APRN*, is a psychiatric nurse practitioner who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of children, adolescents, and adults with mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. She is the holder of a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from the University of New Hampshire, a Master of Science degree in Psychiatric Nursing from Rivier College, and an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse license in the state of New Hampshire. She has been in private practice in the Greater Nashua and Manchester areas of New Hampshire since 1998. While Ms. Ganem has chosen to focus on her clinical practice, she was an Assistant Professor in the Family Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner Program at Rivier University for several years.