

APPs at Children's Mercy: A Discussion with Cathy Cartwright

Cathy Cartwright, DNP, RN-BC, PCNS, FAAN shares her background and role developing Academy for Professional Development and Advanced Practice Providers at Children's Mercy.



Featured Speaker:

Cathy Cartwright, DNP, RN-BC, PCNS, FAAN

Cathy Cartwright is the Director of Advanced Practice Professional Development at Children's Mercy Kansas City with 20 years' experience as a Pediatric Clinical Nurse Specialist in neurosurgery. She is a past president of the American Association of Neuroscience Nurses and the co-editor of the book *Nursing Care of the Pediatric Neurosurgery Patient*. She is the 2015 National Magnet Nurse of the Year for Exemplary Professional Practice and a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing.

Transcription:

Trisha Williams: Hi guys, welcome to Advanced Practice Perspectives. I'm Tricia Williams.

Tobie O'Brien: And I'm Toby O'Brien. This is a podcast created by advanced practice providers. For advanced practice providers. We will be highlighting our amazing APPs at Children's Mercy and do some education along the way.

Trisha Williams: We are so glad that you're joining us today. So sit back, tune in, and let's get started today.

Tobie O'Brien: We are so excited to welcome Cathy Cartwright. Cathy is the Director of Advanced Practice Professional Development at Children's Mercy, Kansas City. Welcome Cathy.

Cathy Cartwright: Well, thank you, Tricia and Toby. Thank you so much for having me on today. I'm really excited to be your first guest.

Trisha Williams: Cathy, we are so lucky to have you as our first guest. I feel like Toby, and I know that your professional accolades very well and we've had the honor to learn from you, but let's kind of share your story with our listeners. Tell us all about you.

Cathy Cartwright: The director of advanced practice professional development at Children's Mercy. I have been in this role for four years. I have been a nurse for over 45 years, which sounds like a really long time, but it is allowed for me to do some pretty amazing things. And if you're in nursing long enough, you have the opportunity to do a lot of different things. Prior to this, I have been a manager of several pediatric units down at the University of Missouri in Columbia. I have been a pediatric clinical nurse specialist in neurosurgery for 20 years and four years ago, I decided to go into this role of professional development because I love seeing advanced practice providers develop to their full potential.

Tobie O'Brien: Awesome, Cathy, we would love if you could give our listeners sort of a bird's eye view of the advanced practice group at children's mercy

Cathy Cartwright: And it keeps changing. We have 390 advanced practice nurses at Children's Mercy. We have six physician assistants and Gina Weddell, and I are the two directors. She's the director of Advanced Practice Programs and she does credentialing and I'm doing the professional development. And together we are trying to let our advanced practice providers reach their full potential. So as an overview, we don't have any people who directly report to us as far as advanced practice providers. However, we are responsible for their credentialing and their professional development. I'd like to provide opportunities for advanced practice providers to have the tools they need and the resources they need to take great care of their patients, and also to develop professionally.

Trisha Williams: That is a very huge role to take on for that many advanced practice providers. We are honored to have you at Children's Mercy, for sure. Where are these advanced practice providers located within Children's Mercy? Can you give us a little insight as to like the departments and things throughout the hospital that advanced practice providers are at?

Cathy Cartwright: I believe they are pretty much everywhere at Children's Mercy. They are in all of our locations. We have them inpatient. We have them outpatient, they work in surgery, they work in medicine, they work in critical care. They just pretty much work everywhere, which is amazing to see the expertise of the advanced practice providers that we have.

Tobie O'Brien: Yeah, absolutely. And really one of the things that Trisha and I both had the opportunity to take that you were a huge part of developing was the Advanced Practice Leadership Academy. So could you tell us a little bit about your vision or how this Academy came to be?

Cathy Cartwright: I think this is a really great program and I was presenting this program nationally at a meeting for advanced practice providers last Fall. And they were pretty impressed by the fact that we have something like this here at Children's Mercy several years ago, probably five years ago. We talked about this at the Advanced Practice Advisory Council here at Children's Mercy. And that is a council made up of advanced practice providers from all over the hospital, kind of like a student council, but not exactly, but just to give the advanced practice providers a voice. And we talked about having something that would promote professional development. And so in 2017, we had our first cohort of the Academy for Professional Development and it started out being for APRNs, and then we expanded it and we've had PAs take the course. We are in the seventh cohort right now. And we have had for the last three cohorts, we have actually added members of the psychosocial department, child life, language services, dog facilitators, to join our group because it's been so successful.

And this Academy gives providers opportunities to expand their ideas for improving patient care. It all started when you maybe would go to a meeting and I'd hear this from other advanced practice nurses, you'd go to a meeting and somebody would present something and you'd think, wait a minute, we've been doing this here at Children's Mercy for a couple of years now, it's not that great. Or they would say, I've got this great idea and I want to do something with it. I just don't know what to do. And so we decided that we needed to have some sort of way to give providers their resources that they needed so that they could bring these ideas to fruition and in turn it would improve patient care. And so that's how it got started.

Trisha Williams: I know that I've had the privilege of taking that class and Toby has as well. And we learned a significant amount of different topics regarding advocacy, leadership, research, quality improvement. And so it brought to, for me the idea of a research project that I'm doing, and I know Toby as well, and actually the idea of this podcast. So we would like to really thank you for starting that Academy, because it has been a huge game changer for my professional life as well. So it is an amazing class. I wish everybody could take it.

Cathy Cartwright: That's great. And you two are the shining stars for taking it and running with it like this. All the members of the classes have projects that they're working on. Not everybody can bring them to fruition, but you guys certainly have. And I think that's terrific.

Tobie O'Brien: Yeah. It's definitely been a really fun process to go back through. I mean, this is kind of stuff we learned back when we were in school just a couple of years ago, and just bringing it back to light and going through everything again, and you mentioned patient care. And I think it's a great that we get an opportunity to think through, okay, how can we improve patient care? Instead of just the daily taking care of patients, we actually had the opportunity to step aside and think through it, it just gets so busy. We oftentimes don't get that opportunity. So that's how I feel like I've benefited from taking the course as well.

Cathy Cartwright: I think a lot of people feel that way you go into your job and that's all you can do is just do your job and go home and you do a great job, but then you wonder if there's something more out there and you'd like to feel more fulfilled and maybe things are kind of just not going as great as you'd like, you know, where's that passion that I had when I first started. And so this course is hopefully reigniting the passion in providers and get back out there and realize why you're doing what you're doing. And I think that's happened.

Trisha Williams: I agree. I think that it has happened for sure. And it's like the ability to be able to see your idea, come to fruition or to write that letter to the editor of the newspaper and have it published in the newspaper. That was a fun project. That was a fun project. So Cathy, can you expand a little bit about the types of modules that are within the Leadership Academy and what some of the little projects are that we do?

Cathy Cartwright: Sure. So, we started out with the leadership module and we had everyone take the disc assessment, which helps you learn your leadership style and how it affects others and how those affect you, which I think was very eye-opening and pretty much spot on for everybody.

Trisha Williams: It was a little scary how spot on that was.

Cathy Cartwright: Yes. And how people, why people react, how they react. And then we took it a little further and talked about developing your mission and vision statement and what excites you, what ignites your passion for what you do and why do you do what you do? And I think it's caused people to look deep inside themselves and take a better look at why you're doing what you're doing. We added mindfulness, gosh, almost after the first class, because we realized that people needed something to help manage the stress of being a provider. So I think that's been really helpful. We have advocacy and a lot of people may think that advocacy is not that exciting. And I must admit that I didn't know enough about it to get excited about it, but Stephanie Seeger, who is in government relations has made it exciting. And it is one of the most exciting modules. And you mentioned the letter to the editor is my favorite module.

Tobie O'Brien: That was my favorite module. It was really fun to see all of the things going on within children's mercy, that I really didn't know was happening. So I loved hearing a lot of the outreach that was going on.

Cathy Cartwright: And I think that's the purpose of the course is to let you know what resources we have here at Children's Mercy, because we have amazing, wonderful resources, and you all have the ideas. You just need to be connected to the resources so you can make things happen. So we also had the dissemination module so that you could disseminate your work, how to do a poster presentation, how to write an abstract, how to present at a national conference. We had other research and evidence based practice. People talk about how to start your projects. So hopefully it's a well rounded program.

Trisha Williams: Well, I can speak on my behalf that I think it was an extremely well-rounded program that I got a lot from. So thank you again for that.

Cathy Cartwright: It was a whole group that worked on this. Believe me, we have a committee that works on this and they work pretty hard to try and improve it every time.

Trisha Williams: Yeah, that's great. If you could offer one piece of advice or maybe a little summary of some advice for an advanced practice provider that is starting to think about wanting a little bit more than patient care, say a nurse practitioner or a physician's assistant. That's a couple of years out of practice. What are some further steps to take? How do they even begin to jump off the platform to start a project?

Cathy Cartwright: I have a formula for professional development or professional success, and its P 3 plus Y equals professional success. So you'd have to have passion. You have to identify your passion. What is it that gets you excited. And then you have to have a plan more than just coming to work each day. What do you want to do five years from now? Do you want to go back to school? What do you want to do? And then you have to persevere because it's not easy. And people that succeed, it's not so much that they're smart. They are smart, but they persevere even when are obstacles that are thrown up. And then the why is to say yes. So when opportunities arise, you need to say yes, because you never know what they'll lead to. So I guess the number one piece of advice I would say is to join your professional organization and get involved. Don't just pay your money every year, but get on the list, serve, meet people, go to meetings, volunteer to be on committees. And I would say that is the most important thing to help you grow professionally.

Tobie O'Brien: Well, that's great advice.

Trisha Williams: That is great advice. And I love the P three plus why I wrote that down on my piece of paper. I'm going to use that. I love it. That's great.

Tobie O'Brien: I do too. I love that. That's great. I think we're starting to run a bit short on time, so we probably need to wrap up, but what we would like to end on is something a little bit more lighthearted. So we want to know some outrageous way, Cathy, that you have taken on the pandemic.

Cathy Cartwright: I thought about this and I thought I've just been staying home and trying to stay away from disease. But in May, I graduated with my doctor of nursing practice. And I guess in itself, it's not that amazing because more and more nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists are doing this, but it was 40 years since I got my master's degree in May of 1980. And so I think that's what makes it pretty outrageous is doing it this late in your career. But why not? If you want to do it, you feel like doing it. Okay. Go for it.

Trisha Williams: That's awesome, go for it for sure.

Tobie O'Brien: Yeah. Congratulations on that. Thanks.

Trisha Williams: Yeah. Congratulate, P 3 plus Y. Right. Great. Well, Cathy, thank you for joining the podcast today and for all your hard work and dedication in supporting all of the advanced practice providers at Children's Mercy. If our listeners have additional questions or would like some additional follow-up with you, how can they get ahold of you or reach you?

Cathy Cartwright: They can certainly email me. That's probably the best way now because not many people are in their offices. It's (<mailto:CCcartwright@cmh.edu>) or (<mailto:Brien@cmh.edu>). And I would be pleased to talk with them. I love working with advanced practice providers.

Trisha Williams: Cathy, we appreciate talking with you today. So guys, if you have a topic you want to hear about, or you are interested in becoming a guest, you can email us at TDO@cmh.edu or (Brien@cmh.edu) or (TWilliams@cmh.edu). Once again, thanks so much for listening to the Advanced Practice Perspectives Podcast.