



AANA Position on CRNAs Teaching AA Students in the Clinical Setting

CRNAs are often involved in helping to train other professionals in specific clinical skills, including anesthesiology residents (e.g. airway management). While CRNAs may be able to train other professionals in specific clinical skills, CRNAs cannot educate other professionals in the entire practice of anesthesia if their scope of practice differs from that of CRNAs. Therefore, the AANA advises CRNAs to *not* participate in teaching anesthesiologist assistant (AA) students in any setting for the following reasons:

- CRNAs are educated to be autonomous providers who are not required to work with anesthesiologists. In contrast, AAs must work under the direct supervision of an anesthesiologist in an anesthesia care team (ACT). Consequently, CRNAs are advised not to teach AA students because of limitations to AAs' scope of practice, including the need for an anesthesiologist to be present to supervise AAs.
- CRNAs are able to formulate and implement anesthesia care plans autonomously based on critical thinking and in-depth knowledge, whereas AAs can only work as part of an anesthesia care team (ACT) with all tasks delegated by an anesthesiologist. Therefore, anesthesiologists are best positioned to teach AA students to assist anesthesiologists as part of the ACT.
- CRNAs are qualified to perform all aspects of anesthesia care autonomously, based on their education, training, licensure, and certification; by comparison, AAs are limited to serving in an assistant capacity to anesthesiologists. Additionally, the educational path to becoming a CRNA includes rigorous clinical and critical care prerequisites for entry into a nurse anesthesia program; there are no such requirements for entry into an AA program.
- While it is acceptable for CRNAs to train another provider on specific technical skills, CRNAs cannot educate and evaluate students, other than student registered nurse anesthetists (SRNAs) and resident physician anesthesiologists, in the entire practice of anesthesia due to substantial differences in clinical background, educational paths and scope of practice.