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**NIEKOL HALL, CONFLUENCE HEALTH APP CORE MEDICAL DIRECTOR AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT,
NAMED RURAL PA OF THE YEAR BY WAPA**

Wenatchee, WA: Niekol Hall, advanced practice provider (APP) core medical director and physician assistant (PA) working in hospital medicine for Confluence Health, was recently named the Rural Physician Assistant of the Year by the Washington Academy of Physician Assistants (WAPA) at their spring conference held jointly with the Oregon Society of Physician Assistants (OSPA). The prestigious award recognizes outstanding contributions of a Washington State PA in rural community healthcare.

“I am honored and humbled to receive this recognition,” remarked Hall. “This is not only a reflection of my work as a clinician and as a leader but a reflection of all the work that Confluence Health advanced practice providers do to provide care to patients, especially those in the most rural areas who would otherwise not travel for care.”

The Rural Physician Assistant of the Year Award is presented annually by the WAPA in recognition of an outstanding person who has made an exceptional contribution to rural community healthcare, celebrating the role of a PA in showing their dedication, compassion, and innovation in delivering healthcare to underserved communities and areas. In particular, the award recognizes those who strive to overcome the challenges inherent in delivering rural healthcare, extending beyond simple clinical excellence into community engagement, patient advocacy, and initiatives that improve access to healthcare resources. As [described by the WAPA](#), the award “honors their profound impact and commitment to ensuring equitable healthcare access for all individuals, regardless of geographic location.”

“Niekol is a remarkable provider and leader, and this award is well deserved,” commented Dr. James Murray, chief medical officer for Confluence Health. “Even before she accepted the position of APP core medical director, she was already doing so much to advance the profession and to improve how healthcare is delivered, establishing committees and bringing people together to do the oftentimes unseen but important work that translates into better care for patients and a better system overall. She has always been someone willing to volunteer and step in to do what was needed. She has been a tireless advocate for APPs and the community we serve, while also being an outstanding colleague and wonderful clinician.”

The award was presented to Hall at a ceremony held March 8th in Stevenson, Washington as a part of the 2026 WAPA/OSPA joint spring conference held at Skamania Lodge. Previously, Maria Dalzell, another Confluence Health physician assistant working in the nephrology department, [received the Rural Physician Assistant of the Year award from WAPA in 2024](#).

“When I think about why I became a PA it always comes back to the people – patients, clinicians, and teams – and the belief we can deliver care better together,” reflected Hall when asked about her reaction to receiving the award. “I am grateful to those who mentor me, the teams who trust me, and to the APPs across Confluence Health who continue to show up with compassion every day, even when healthcare feels heavy.”

About Confluence Health

Confluence Health serves the largest geographic region of any healthcare system in Washington State, covering over 12,000 square miles of Okanogan, Grant, Douglas, and Chelan counties. Confluence Health is one of only two locally-lead

healthcare systems in the state with the purpose of maintaining availability and access to high-quality, cost-effective healthcare services for North Central Washington. The Confluence Health Board of Directors provides governance for Confluence Health and includes nine community board members and six physician board members.

For More Information

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