

# Capitol Connection, AAPA, Feb. 17, 2011

**By Barbara Martin, PA-C and Kate Grace, PA-C**

*Barbara Martin, President of OSPA, and Kate Grace, Immediate Past President of OSPA, traveled to Washington, D.C., to learn and share information at the American Academy of Physician Assistants' (AAPA) Capitol Connection and CORE training in February 2011.*

We went to Capitol Hill and were able to meet with legislative staffers (and one congressman!) to discuss issues related to Physician Assistant practice in the United States. Kate met with her congressional representative, Greg Walden, Barbara met with the health care staffer for her representative, David Wu, and together they met with staffers for both Senators Wyden and Merkley.

The focus issues were:

1. PAs being able to sign orders for hospice and home health for Medicare patients
2. PAs being able to prescribe buprenorphine (Suboxone) for addiction treatment
3. PAs being eligible for Medicaid Electronic Health Record Incentives (HITECH)

Please see AAPA's Legislative Action page at <http://capwiz.com/aapa/home/>. There you can learn more about these issues and contact your representatives. These issues could change the way that PAs are able to practice in our country, and it is important to have your voice heard! Please check out the advocacy center and get involved. Capitol Connection is held yearly, and all PAs are invited to participate. You can also contact your representatives at their local offices, attend regional town hall meetings, and even invite your legislators to visit your practice and learn more about what PAs do and how we are vital health care providers for Oregon, especially in this time of health care reform. It is important to be involved on both a local and national level in legislation affecting PAs – it is our profession and our duty to advocate for ourselves! Thank you for your efforts.