



Summer Industry Newsletter



ADVOCATING FOR VETERANS AND THE CLINICIANS WHO SERVE THEM

The changes in the Federal government, and specifically those within the VA, continue to challenge AVANS' practices and the livelihood of our members. Following are some critical updates to our organization's work:

- New guidelines may affect how members attend professional development activities like those provided by AVANS. We are working diligently with national contacts in public affairs and personnel to ensure we can provide events in a manner consistent with professional guidelines. We do not, at this time, anticipate any changes to the way we conduct our meetings nor the interaction members have with industry. As private citizens, members are allowed to attend any events and have conversations with anyone they wish, and we have been working diligently to remind VA leadership of their private citizen rights.
- **Critical:** the VA faces a significant reduction in force (RIF). The planned reduction is 83,000 employees (though this number is now under review and may be reduced to 30,000). We are working with legislators and media to help Americans understand the impact this reduction will have in the quality of care experienced by veterans. While public messaging has promised no reduction will impact patient care, it is simply impossible to reduce this significantly without impact to patient care. We ask you to contact your local representatives and ask that the VA retain the majority of its workforce.

Continued...

In this newsletter:

2026 Annual Meeting-- Save the Date

2025 Annual Meeting Highlights

Message from the Board


Join IRC

AVANS Educational Program Opportunities

Resilience Program

This newsletter is being sent to the leads at our partnering companies. Kindly share this information with relevant individuals within your organization. If this newsletter was passed along to you and you would like to be included on the newsletter distribution list, please contact JoAnn Wahl at joann@vaneurology.org.

Likewise, if you are no longer the lead for your company, please let us know.

- 
- As changes are made to internal professional development efforts, AVANS is reviewing ways it can help support these efforts and maintain excellent continuing education opportunities. This will require new and increased support from grants and funders. We are currently holding feasibility conversations to assess our ability to help maintain these important efforts in the VA.

Our continued request of you: if your company has efforts, talking points, or resources you'd like to share to help us advocate on behalf of our members, please reach out to me at julie@vaneurology.org to explore how we can collaborate.

While we support all efforts to utilize tax dollars most effectively, we also want to maintain a high quality of care and research outcomes for our veterans. We know you are dedicated to the same, and invite synergistic conversations to help us best support our members and the veterans they serve.

Julie Lawson, M.A., CCMP
Executive Director
Association of VA Neurology Services



SAVE THE DATE

2026 AVANS ANNUAL MEETING

MARCH 6-8, 2026

DENVER, COLORADO

Message from the AVANS Board of Directors

AVANS has now conducted two annual meetings and been in existence for 3 years. We believe the great progress we have made in such a short time proves we are on the path to creating a long-standing, successful organization.

With this in mind, we are facing unprecedented times in the VA. Recent changes and staff reductions have disrupted our best practices. We continue to be dedicated to caring for veterans, providing them the highest quality of care as they navigate neurological challenges. We are committed to supporting our members as they navigate policy changes and staffing shortages, or as they leave the VA as part of a

reduction in force or early retirement.

We hope you will join us in recognizing the work our members do. If you are visiting a VA hospital, please say thank you to a provider. It matters more than you might think, particularly at times when their working environment is strained.

And as we go forward, please call on us with your questions and ideas. We greatly appreciate your support and know that we are all working for a shared goal: the health and healing of veterans.

Thank you for all you do, and we look forward to continuing our partnership in the future.



2025 AVANS Annual Meeting Highlights

- Approximately 70 healthcare professionals across disciplines who care for veterans with neurological disorders
- 8 hours of CE-eligible learning
- 3 networking opportunities between members and industry, a unique opportunity not afforded in the VA
- Poster session with industry and provider submissions

We look forward to expanding in 2026!

Many federal employees are facing a difficult and tumultuous time. Times like these require resilience - but do you know how to build it for yourself and others?

A special thank you to Pfizer for supporting production of this video.



This brief session walks you through the seven principles of resilience, helping you develop the outlook and skills needed to navigate change. Based on proven research, you will learn about how courage, self-awareness, mindset, confidence, community, gratitude, and flexibility have an indisputable connection to your wellbeing. Additionally, you'll learn how the change process is experienced by you and others and what to expect in the near future.

This session is led by Julie Lawson, MA, CCMP, an expert in resilience research and change management. Julie has worked with thousands of people in times of crisis to reduce stress, increase resilience, and successfully manage change. Julie is a #1 international bestselling author on resilience and currently serves as the Executive Director of AVANS.

Join IRC



For more information contact
joann@vaneurology.org

Reserve your seat at the table...

AVANS invites interested companies to join our Industry Relations Council (IRC). The IRC is an advisory council of individuals representing a variety of corporations and non-profits whose products and services benefit veterans with cancer and hematological disorders. Members receive exclusive benefits and opportunities throughout the year.

Membership is by application and open to those who wish to participate in shaping AVANS priorities and building ethical, meaningful relationships between industry representatives and medical professionals working with veterans. There is a modest fee to become an IRC member.

Industry Sponsored Educational Opportunities

AVANS is open to working with Industry Partners to develop educational programs to benefit members, and to developing a better understanding of the priorities, practices, guidelines, and the needs/expectations of health care providers and patients/caregivers.

Expert Roundtable Discussions (non-CE)

A panel of AVANS experts gathers to discuss specific cancer issues, patient challenges, treatment paradigms, barriers to care, problems and solutions. Practitioners will focus on the unique needs of patients, best practices, and resources available for practitioners and veterans. The 60-minute session will be video-taped, edited and prepared for on-demand viewing with a notation of support from the sponsor. The Roundtables will be promoted by AVANS and will live on the AVANS website.

For more information contact JoAnn Wahl
joann@vaneurology.org

AVANS is grateful for the generous support from our industry partners and for all that you do for our veterans!!