

2026



AORN

C O N G R E S S

Chapter Evolution Workgroup (CEWG)

Nakeisha Tolliver DNP, MBA, RN, NE-BC, CNOR, CSSM



Task Force/Committee

Committee/TF

Chair: Nakeisha Tolliver

Members:

- Alphonzo Baker Sr.
- Jean Santiago
- Kristy Wheeler
- Stella Yau

Staff/Board Liaisons

Staff:

- Renee Battie
- Mary Anna McOwen

Board Liaison:

- Laura Gayton

President's Charge

The Charge

Explore new chapter model options to enhance member engagement.

1. Review and analyze the findings from the Chapter Engagement Task Force over the past three years (2021-2025).
2. Assess and analyze the results of the 2025-chapter engagement survey to highlight key findings for the 2026 House of Delegates.
3. By February 3, 2026, recommend at least two new chapter model options to the Board of Directors based on analysis of the Chapter Engagement Task Force three-year findings and the 2025-chapter engagement survey results.

Importance of This Charge

- Over the past several years, AORN has observed declining participation and increasing leadership challenges within local chapters. At the same time, members continue to express strong interest in professional connection, education, and networking.
- This work was undertaken to understand the gap between member needs and the current chapter structure, and to identify engagement models that ensure AORN remains accessible, relevant, and sustainable for the future.

Purpose of This Work



Provide strategic background on AORN chapter engagement



Summarize member feedback and survey findings



Identify structural barriers to participation



Present engagement models for future decision making

5 Year AORN Chapter Engagement Task Force Assignment Pattern & Outcomes (2021–2025)

2021/2022

- Explore alternative structures/matrix for member units
- Developed and implemented survey for members on value of chapters.

2022/2023

- ▶ Increase member engagement by utilizing several different platforms

2023/2024

- ▶ Consider new models and prospects for members across the country to participate in member engagement opportunities such as networking and education.
- ▶ Developed and implemented survey for members on value of chapters.

2024/2025

- ▶ Consider new models and prospects for members across the country to participate in member engagement opportunities such as networking and education.
- ▶ Developed & Implemented actionable survey feedback, pre during and post expo (1677 members)
- ▶ No New model or recommendation identified.

2025/2026

- ▶ Consider new models and prospects for to increase engagement engagement Developed & Implemented
- ▶ No New model or chapter recommendation identified, keep local model and educate leaders.



What Member Feedback Revealed

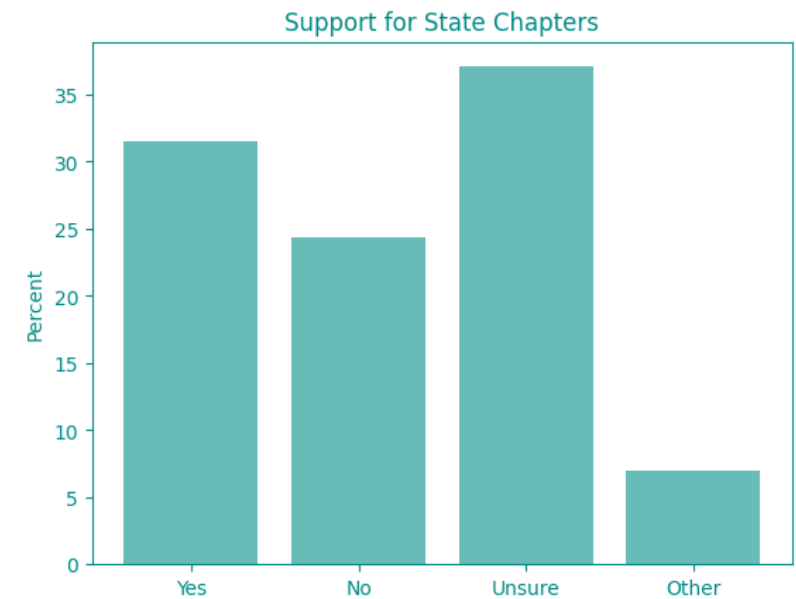
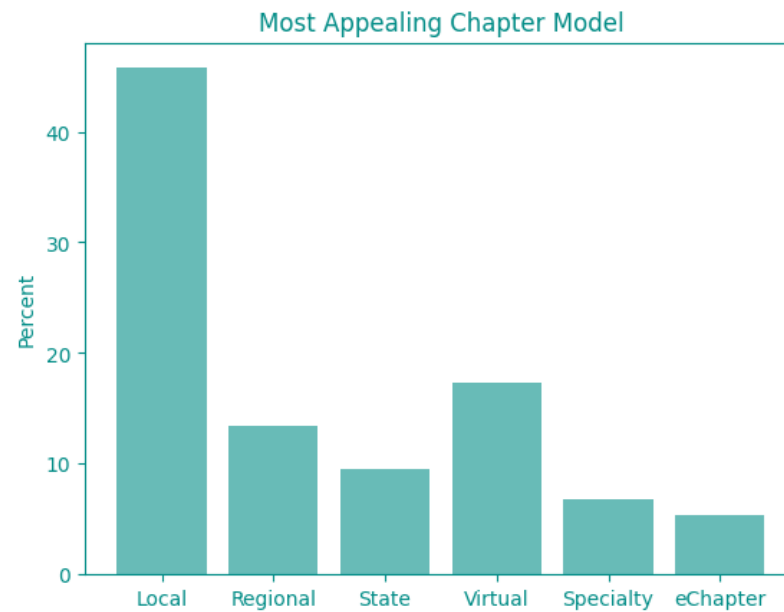
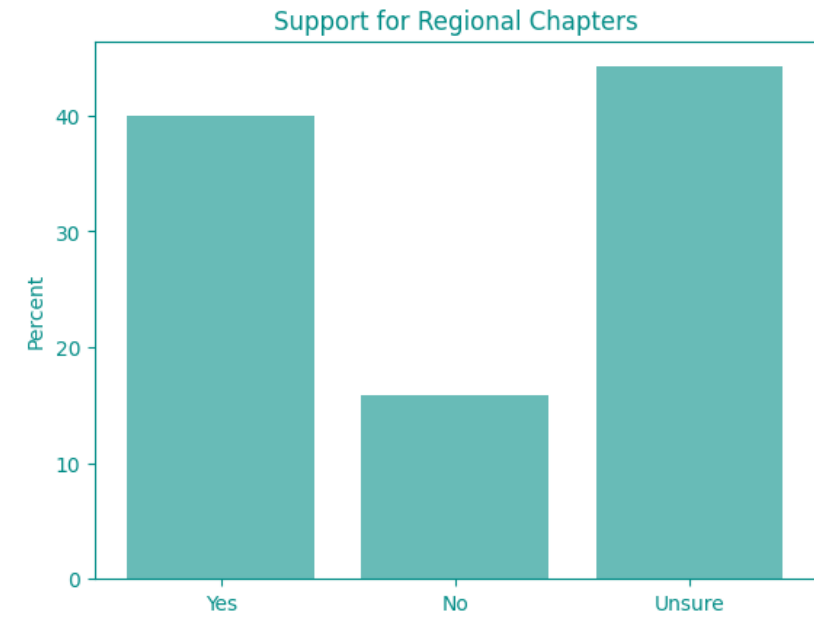
Chapter engagement is inconsistent across membership

Key barriers: scheduling conflicts, geographic distance, communication gaps

Many members report rarely or never participating

Insight: The challenge is structural accessibility, not lack of interest

What the Data Really Tells Us About Chapter Structure



Engagement Models Explored

- Enhanced local chapters
- Regional collaboration
- State-level structures
- Specialty communities
- Virtual engagement options

**Other associations confirm that chapters remain relevant—but most use regional, specialty, or council models rather than local-only structures.*





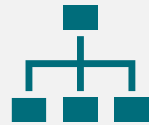
The Strategic Choice Before the Board



The question is not whether chapters remain valuable



Members clearly value connection, networking, and education



Key decision: maintain a single structure or evolve engagement pathways



Consider a broader engagement ecosystem

Recommendation

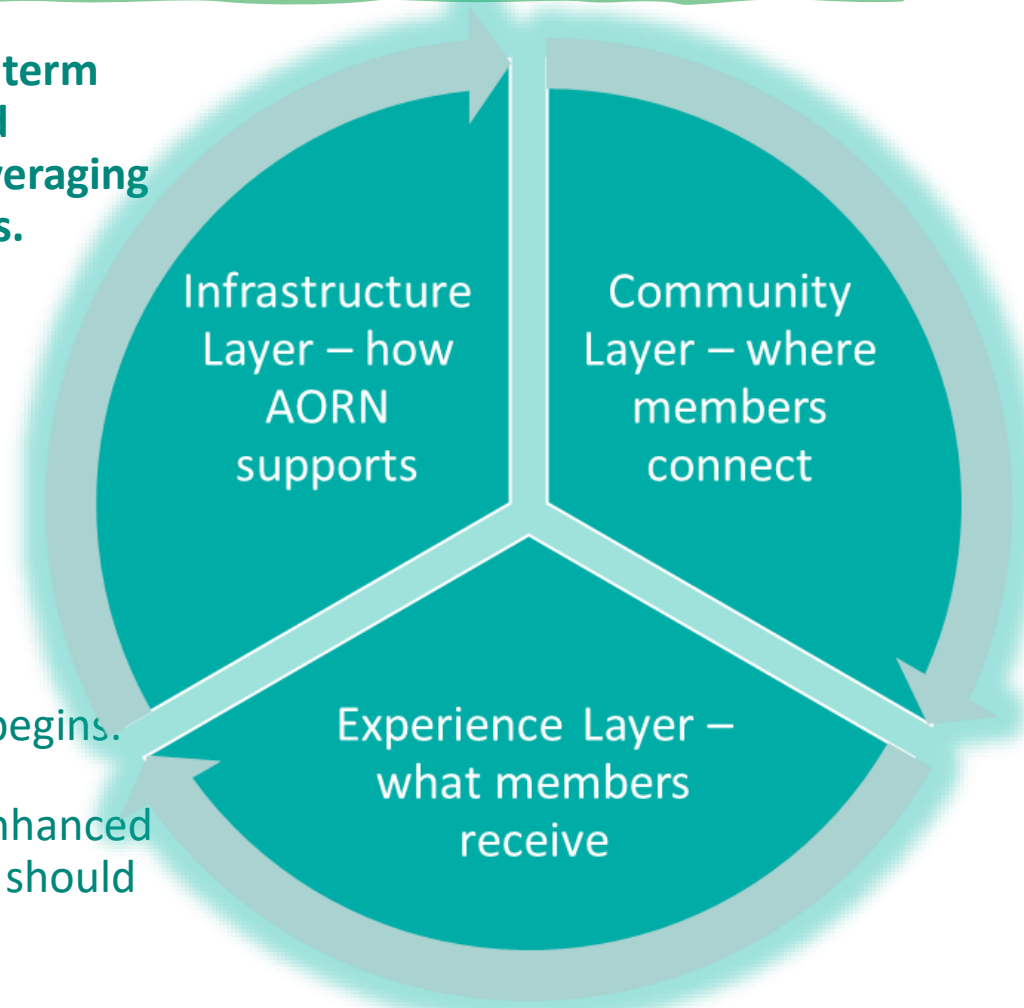
Transitional Foundation within the: MEN (Member Engagement Network) Ecosystem

We recommend that AORN continue to support local chapters in the near term while the AORN staff modernizes delivery, reduces leadership burden, and ensures equitable access—through the creation of the MEN Ecosystem leveraging Regional, Specialty, and Virtual engagement model best practice principles.

This approach:

- Preserves the value and history of local chapters
- Stabilizes current engagement
- Creates space for innovation
- Prevents disruption while the new ecosystem is created and transition begins.

*However, survey findings and task force history indicate that short term enhanced local chapters alone will not resolve systemic barriers to engagement. They should be positioned as a transitional foundation, not the sole future model.



What the MEN Ecosystem Must Include:

To be effective, this model must move beyond incremental updates and operate under national standards with shared infrastructure.

1. Hybrid-Engagement

- All meetings available live virtually
- Recordings accessible on demand
- National hosting and archiving support

2. National Content & Programming Engine

- Annual chapter programming calendar
- Plug-and-play CE sessions
- National speaker bureau
- Specialty topic tracks

3. Leadership Simplification & Support

- Fewer officer roles
- Micro-volunteering options
- Regional Chapter Success Coaches
- Succession pathways
- Yearly Volunteer Leader Academy for Chapter Presidents/Quarterly trainings

4. Centralized Administrative Support

- National event registration
- Automated communications
- Financial/compliance toolkits
- Standard dashboards

5. Performance Standards & Accountability

- Minimum expectations:
 - ≥4 hybrid CE events per year
 - Monthly digital communication
 - Attendance and satisfaction tracking
 - Leadership transition planning
 - Chapters unable to meet these standards should transition into Regional, Specialty, or Virtual communities, AORN to create a transition road map to support.

Essentially this is about a member's ability to choose.

Discussion and Questions