



INTERVIEW

WITH PPTA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

BY MAT GULICK,
DIRECTOR, GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS, PPTA





We sat down with Amy Efantis, PPTA's President & CEO, to learn more about what excites her about her new role, what her expectations are for PPTA in the coming years, what she admires in others — and a couple things that might surprise National Football League (NFL) fans in the United States.

Q What most excites you as you take on this new role?

What most excites me is the ability to share the success stories behind our member companies' lifesaving therapies. As PPTA, we are positioned to inform policymakers, health care providers, and other critical decision-makers toward a common goal of ensuring patients have access to essential medicines, particularly individuals living with rare diseases.

Q What do you feel are the greatest opportunities facing PPTA and the plasma protein therapeutics industry in the next five years? Ten years?

The greatest opportunity facing PPTA in the short term is working with partner stakeholders worldwide to advance the shared goal of increasing opportunities for plasma collection and the continued development of innovative therapies to treat rare diseases. Together, we have such a unique story to share! For individuals living with primary immunodeficiency, alpha-one antitrypsin deficiency, hereditary angioedema, neurological diseases, and various bleeding disorders, plasma donors are essential to meeting the clinical needs of patients. I've recently had the privilege to interact with patient organization representatives in the United States and Europe. I was deeply affected by the maturity of these groups and their ability to use their voice with policymakers to express the need for plasma and lifesaving medicines for their constituents. This good news story about the value and high impact of PPTs needs to be told to decision-makers around the world, and it must be heard.

I am excited to take "How Is Your Day?" — the awareness campaign PPTA launched last year — to the next level and work with our stakeholders to build effective educational tools in our shared effort to ensure patients have access to life-sustaining therapies. Today, patients are living longer, more fruitful lives. I want tomorrow to be even brighter for patients, and I am committed to PPTA's steadfast pledge to this goal. Just as important, the "How Is Your Day?" campaign offers us an incredible opportunity to celebrate and thank source plasma donors for the gift they provide every time they donate. Quite literally, plasma donors save lives, and this campaign has taken great steps to recognize donors. I look forward to building that momentum.

Other key players include physicians and researchers. Better tools for identifying and diagnosing diseases that rely on plasma treatments are under development, and a predicted increase in disease states, like secondary immunodeficiency, emphasizes the importance of preparing today to meet tomorrow's needs. Longer term, we must recognize that the world is increasingly interconnected. We must continue to work in partnership to ensure unfettered access to plasma protein therapies for all those who rely on them.

Q Relatedly, what do you anticipate being some of our challenges?

A host of challenges stand in our path. Reimbursement policies are and will continue to be obstacles to ensuring access to essential medicines for our patients worldwide. PPTA plays a pivotal role in communicating the value of our therapies so that payers — both public and private — understand the benefit of plasma protein therapies for the patients who need them. We also face the challenge of counterparts around the world who don't believe that compensated and uncompensated systems can coexist. We must find a way to move together into the future, with complementary collection systems, if we are to meet the needs of the patients we serve. We should also be concerned about sentiments of national self-sufficiency that are percolating in countries around the world. It is both unrealistic and unnecessarily limiting to put borders around the world's supply of plasma. Disease, after all, recognizes no borders. Finally, we must remain steadfastly committed to the high voluntary standards of safety put in place by our industry and regulators over the past three decades. Our track record of safety during that period reflects the increased level of quality our members maintain.

Q What characteristics do you most admire in others?

I admire resilience in others. When I meet people who are faced with challenges — health related, financial, spiritual, or emotional — and they're living an abundant life in defiance of those obstacles, I'm inspired. I have a child with a learning disability. She has faced teasing, misunderstanding, and even intolerance. In spite of that, she soldiers on every day with a gloriously positive attitude and refuses to let her learning disability limit her horizons.

Q Tell us something about yourself that might surprise us.

Two things — I was a plasma donor throughout my college years, and I'm very proud of that contribution. And I'm an NFL owner. I own two shares in the Green Bay Packers, my hometown football team and the only NFL team wholly owned by its fans! ●