



RCoA: President's News

April 2016

THE ROYAL COLLEGE
OF ANAESTHETISTS



Respect

(Aretha Franklin, 1967)

The news this month is again dominated by the stalemate in the junior doctors' dispute in England. Following unilateral contract imposition by the Government, we now face the prospect of the first all-out strike by doctors in over a generation. Read the [College's latest statement](#) on the current situation which was published today.

NICE

National Institute for
Health and Care Excellence

Advancing the QI agenda

Together with Vice-President Richard Marks and senior College staff, I met with Professor David Haslam, Chair of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), on Wednesday, 13 April. This is an annual meeting; however, on this occasion there was open and frank discussion on how both organisations could work more collaboratively on guidance reviews and the evaluation of new technical developments. The central issue which will enable better cooperation is the focus of the College and NICE on quality improvement. Intelligence sharing from local and nationally conducted audits to evaluate the benefit of existing NICE guidance is planned. We will keep you informed of how you can help with this important collaboration.



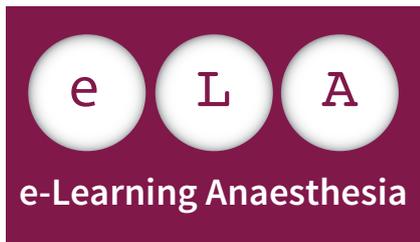
Physicians' Assistants (Anaesthesia)

The issue of non-physician anaesthetist assistants has been a controversial topic within our specialty for some time now. In collaboration with the Association of Physicians' Assistants (Anaesthesia) [APA(A)], the RCoA and AAGBI have drawn up an [agreed scope of practice](#) for PA(A)s on qualification which acknowledges and addresses many of the concerns expressed by Fellows and Members.

Our view, and the view of the AAGBI, is that registered, regulated PA(A)s, supervised by medically qualified anaesthetists, can make a valuable contribution towards a safe and sustainable anaesthetic workforce at a time when predictions of changing UK demographic indicate a need for a 25–40% expansion in the number of anaesthesia providers by 2035.



We appreciate that this topic elicits considerable debate but would like to stress that patient safety remains the priority of the College and the AAGBI. Further information on this recent development, which will be reviewed as the evidence continues to develop, [can be found here](#).



New e-learning module

I am pleased to announce the launch of a new e-learning package, the 'Anaesthesia for Austere and Humanitarian Environments' module. The resource provides an informative overview of the differences that anaesthetists find in challenging environments, as well as practical tips on adapting knowledge and skills to practice in diverse settings often with limited resources and using unfamiliar equipment.

The package is suitable for Fellows and Members considering work in resource-poor countries or intending to undertake pre-deployment training with an international emergency medical team. The sessions are freely available [from the RCoA website](#) or as a module [within e-Learning Anaesthesia](#).

Instrumental to the development of this resource, the RCoA's International Programmes Department continues to forge relationships with doctors across borders to improve global anaesthesia provision.



Promoting safety

We are grateful to members who continue to share innovative projects that contribute to patient safety in their hospitals. The March [Safety Project of the Month](#) features Dr Cristina Diaz-Navarro and colleagues of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, who have designed a new communication tool for structured team debriefing after learning events.

Successfully adopted in a number of fields including aviation and the military, the [TALK framework](#) has been applied to healthcare and proposes a way to guide a learning dialogue between team members after an individual case or clinical session. The conversation can review positive and negative aspects of case management and is adaptable to each team's learning needs. Feedback on the tool has been positive and the TALK framework has been adopted at other centres nationally and internationally. Further information on can be found on the [SALG website](#).



Focus on our Fellows and Members

In recent weeks we have issued a membership survey and would like to hear your thoughts and experiences of College services and support functions. If you have not yet had the opportunity to complete the survey, [please click here](#) to submit your feedback **by midnight on Friday, 22 April**.

We have had a very encouraging response rate to the survey so far and would like you to feed back to us so we can continue to improve the way the College supports you throughout your career. We will keep you up to date with the findings of the survey and future developments. If you have any questions or comments please email engage@rcoa.ac.uk.



New Clinical Trials Network

I am delighted to announce the launch of the UK Perioperative Medicine Clinical Trials Network (CTN), which was the highlight of the inaugural National Institute for Academic Anaesthesia (NIAA) Annual Scientific Meeting last Thursday. The College is one of the funding partners of the CTN, which is overseen by the NIAA and aims to design and conduct collaborative research in anaesthesia, perioperative medicine, and pain medicine.

[This new trials network](#) is an important initiative that will support patient recruitment into large multi-centre clinical trials and generate evidence to improve the health outcomes of the millions of patients undergoing surgery and anaesthesia worldwide each year.



National appointment for top anaesthetist

I would like to extend my congratulations to Dr Ramani Moonesinghe, who has been appointed as Associate National Clinical Director for Elective Care at NHS England. One of 18 NCD appointments announced this month, this is an important national role where Dr Moonesinghe will be advising on all aspects of improving the delivery of the elective perioperative pathway, including improved communication and integration between primary and secondary care, supporting patients in shared decision making and understanding variation in service quality and provision. There is substantial overlap and opportunity for collaboration with the [RCoA's perioperative medicine programme](#).

From 1 April this year, Dr Moonesinghe has also assumed the post of Director of the NIAA's Health Services Research Centre (HSRC). The HSRC conducts important research to improve patient outcomes and oversees the College's influential National Emergency Laparotomy Audit (NELA) and National Audit Projects.

Council Member of the RCoA between 2008 and 2012, many Fellows and Members will be familiar with Dr Moonesinghe, whose research interests include evaluating and developing post-operative outcome measures, measuring quality in anaesthesia and perioperative care, and postgraduate education in perioperative medicine and anaesthesia.



Training excellence in Wales

As part of the UK-wide remit of the College, I have visited both the Scottish and Welsh Advisory Boards this month where I met with the CMOs of the respective countries, Dr Catherine Calderwood and Dr Chris Jones. We discussed issues of mutual interest for the specialty.

I am pleased to announce that two colleagues in Wales have been [awarded prizes by the Welsh Deanery](#) and BMA for their contribution to training. Dr Harsha Reddy who is a consultant in anaesthesia and critical care at Wrexham Maelor Hospital, was one of four doctors presented with a 'BEST Trainer of the Year 2015' award. Professor Chris Callander, consultant anaesthetist at the Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport and Head of the Welsh School of Anaesthesia for the last six years, was presented with the Dean's Recognition Award for his services to Medical Education. Professor Callander led the revision of the Wales Deanery commissioning process with Local Education Providers ensuring alignment with the latest GMC national training standards. Congratulations to both.



Appointment to Governance Review Group

In last month's e-Newsletter we asked for expressions of interest from Fellows and Members who were interested in contributing to the College's governance review. We had a significant level of interest and following independent review have recruited Dr Paul McAndrew, consultant anaesthetist and intensivist from Sunderland to join the Governance Review Group. A Deputy Medical Director at City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Dr McAndrew's responsibilities include Clinical Governance and Policy and Patient Safety. Dr McAndrew is currently undertaking a review in his trust of clinical procurement structures with the aim of integrating existing clinical governance and safety systems.

And finally...

Diplomates Day

Each year in May, the College holds Diplomates Day for those who have achieved their Fellowship of the College and associated Faculties in the preceding year. It is a privilege to be involved in welcoming the next generation of Fellows, and I am looking forward to this year's Diplomates Day on Friday, 6 May at The Central Hall, Westminster.

If you have any comments on any of the issues highlighted in this e-newsletter or would like to express your views on any other matters, I would like to hear from you. Please contact me via presidentnews@rcoa.ac.uk.

Best wishes,
Liam