



RCoA: President's News

June 2016

THE ROYAL COLLEGE
OF ANAESTHETISTS



Here comes the sun

(The Beatles, 1969)

With most of the UK focusing on the vote on continuing membership of the European Union this week, closer to home I am honoured that my peers on Council have re-elected me as President of the College for a second year. I look forward to building on the important work which the College has started since I took office and will continue to collaborate with our Vice Presidents, Council, College staff and you, our Fellows and Members, to shape the future of the specialty within the wider healthcare landscape.

In last month's update I commented on the publication of the [Nuffield Trust report](#), which highlighted workforce challenges and offered potential solutions to help tackle the growing problems that we all face. The Chief Executive of the Nuffield Trust, Nigel Edwards, spoke last week on the topic at the NHS Confederation annual conference, and has recently warned that the [NHS workforce crisis may be irreversible](#). We have known for some time that anaesthesia and intensive care medicine are specialties under pressure, and the publication of our [Medical Workforce Census Report 2015](#) underlines the scale of the challenge facing us. Receiving coverage from UK media outlets including [The Guardian](#) and [Daily Mail](#), the results of the census clearly demonstrate a significant shortfall in the anaesthetic workforce required to meet the need identified by the [2015 Centre for Workforce Intelligence review](#). These statistics are concerning, and while there have been welcome increases in the numbers of consultant and SAS doctors since 2010, it is clear that additional personnel will be required to fill the gaps in service provision (particularly on-call rotas) that already exist across the United Kingdom.

The College will continue to liaise with our Regional Advisers, College Tutors and Clinical Directors' network to clarify the training and service issues which impact on our specialty. We are committed to carrying out additional studies of how gaps in rotas are addressed and will build on the evidence concerning the use of locums, fellowships, and other temporary posts to fill service needs. With 100% of UK anaesthetic departments participating, the census provides a wealth of objective information that underlines the importance of our specialty to the delivery of safe and effective healthcare, it will be invaluable for the College as we make the case for the development of the future anaesthetic workforce. If you have any thoughts on the census or would like to share your experiences with us, please do let me know by contacting presidentnews@rcoa.ac.uk.



Summer Symposium and College Tutors' meeting

Over four beautifully sunny and warm early June days, Brighton played host to 650 College members at our annual Summer Symposium and College Tutors' meeting. With such a fantastic turnout, the programme for both events was equally impressive, with presentations addressing key topics such as perioperative medicine, the future of anaesthetic research, trainee morale and the junior doctor's contract.

One talk that particularly resonated with the delegates was that from [Professor Steve Bolsin](#), who discussed the need and opportunities for health practitioners to raise the quality of patient care. His message was clear – patients deserve and have the right to receive the most modern, high quality care available and that as an integral part of the healthcare service, anaesthetists should work to provide this.

Dr Paul Spargo discussed the [Medical Workforce Census Report 2015](#), which, as I discussed in my introduction, revealed that the number of consultants joining the anaesthetic workforce in the NHS is insufficient to meet the growing patient demand.

The final day of the Summer Symposium featured three important presentations from College Officers and our senior management team:

- » [Tom Grinyer](#) and [Russell Ampofo](#) discussed the [College's new five-year strategy](#), which is due to be launched in the next few weeks; please look out for further communication about this important initiative.

- » [Dr Richard Marks](#) presented findings from the College's first membership survey in which, among other statistics, 97% of respondents agreed that the College is successfully setting high standards for the practice of anaesthesia. Full and detailed results of this survey are currently being analysed; its findings will form a crucial aspect of our implementation of the College's five year strategy, as well as our communications strategy, which is also under development.
- » [Dr Jeremy Langton](#) spoke about the College's plans to celebrate our Silver Jubilee year during 2017. From national, regional, patient, public and staff events, to special editions of the BJA and *Bulletin*, a year-long programme of celebrations is being developed in which all members can be involved. If you have any suggestions or would like to contribute to this, [please let us know](#).

Finally, one of the highlights of my week in Brighton was presenting Mrs Karen Morris with a President's Commendation for her 30 years of service to the College. It was especially pleasing to see her receive a standing ovation from the College Tutors and Regional Advisers with whom she has worked closely in recent years. We're all immensely proud of Karen and grateful for her hard work and dedication to the College and our speciality over so many years. Many thanks and congratulations once again Karen!



BJA now top of the world!

I was reflecting at the Summer Symposium on how informative and influential the *British Journal of Anaesthesia* (BJA) is for our members and in promoting UK anaesthesia internationally. As the College looks towards its Silver Jubilee year in 2017, we are also reminded of the historic tie with the BJA, the oldest and largest independent journal of anaesthesia, which became the official journal of the College in 1990.

I am therefore very pleased to share the news that the BJA is now rated the number one anaesthetic journal in the world! 2015's Impact Factors show that the BJA has risen from 4.85 to 5.62, an increase of more than 15%, setting it above its traditional rival for the top spot, the USA-based *Anesthesiology*. This propels the BJA to the top of the global anaesthesiology listing and is a tremendous achievement for the whole editorial and production team. Thanks also go to Fellows and Members, who have online and print access to the BJA and who contribute by reading and supporting the journal.



HiSLAC
High-intensity Specialist
Led Acute Care

Third annual HiSLAC survey

As part of an independent evaluation of Seven Day Services, the High-intensity Specialist Led Acute Care (HiSLAC) project is funded by the National Institute of Health Research and aims to examine the impact of consultants and associate specialists on reducing the mortality associated with weekend admission to hospital.

Consultants and associate specialists, defined by HiSLAC as doctors who have obtained a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCT), will be invited from specialities in acute Trusts across England to complete a short survey this month, so please look out for the email notification from your Trust's Local Project Lead. Data from the first survey, 'weekend specialist intensity and admission mortality in acute hospital trusts in England: a cross-sectional study', was [recently published in the Lancet](#).

For more information, please visit www.hislac.org.



First regional ACSA meeting

The College's anaesthetic services quality improvement programme, Anaesthesia Clinical Services Accreditation (ACSA), continues to go from strength to strength with the first regional event taking place this month at St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust. Attended by representatives from a number of local Trusts, the event benefitted from the insight of clinicians who have already successfully gone through the process. It featured presentations on how to encourage departmental involvement, task allocation and other proactive steps on how to achieve accreditation. The event also included a useful Q&A session and we were even treated by our kind hosts to some delicious ACSA-inspired cupcakes!

With more than 65 hospitals now engaged in the ACSA process, I am delighted that three new departments have recently gained accreditation, with Salford Royal NHSFT, London's National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery and South Warwickshire NHSFT all achieving the accolade. I am heartened by the way the specialty has embraced our peer review programme and look forward to seeing the number of accredited departments continue to grow. More information about the ACSA process and accredited sites [can be found here](#).



Learning from excellence

June's [Safety Project of the Month](#) features Dr Adrian Plunkett and colleagues at Birmingham Children's Hospital (BCH), who have created a new reporting system for capturing episodes of clinical excellence. Rather than focusing on the minority of adverse incidents based on systemic or individual failings, the team's online proforma aims to capture excellence in order to reward and reinforce good practice.

With the definition of excellence being left to the reporter's discretion, individuals identified receive a formal citation from the Trust Governance department. Excellence reports are used as a quality improvement tool and the team have already demonstrated tangible enhancements, such as improved prescribing practice. With the system now being rolled out in other specialties at BCH and employed by several other hospitals, the team report that their initiative demonstrates how excellence reporting can be used positively to both raise morale and decrease avoidable harm for patients.

For more information, please see the BCH team's website: www.learningfromexcellence.com.



Faculties update

I am pleased to announce that Dr Carl Waldmann has recently been elected Dean of the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine in succession to Dr Anna Batchelor. Carl, who is a consultant anaesthetist and intensivist based in Reading, has been Vice-Dean for the past three years and will take office in September. I am sure you will all join me in congratulating Carl on his appointment and looking forward to maintaining the strong collaboration between FICM and the College on all matters relating to critical care practice and training.

Just to conclude the election news, many congratulations to Dr Barry Miller, who has been elected as the new Faculty of Pain Medicine Dean and Dr John Hughes, who has been elected as the new Vice-Dean. Both will start their new roles from September 2016.

As part of our on-going commitment to facilitate the best possible training for our specialty, the RCoA and the Faculty of Pain Medicine would like to hear from anaesthetic and pain medicine trainees about your experience of and plans for training in pain medicine (acute or chronic). [Our short survey](#) should take no longer than five minutes to complete and all feedback will be anonymised.

Even if you do not currently intend to take part in higher or advanced pain training, please do take the time to complete the survey so that we can highlight any areas in need of improvement.

Healthcare innovation

Healthcare innovation featured prominently during our events in Brighton and I would like to share the news that NHS England has recently launched the NHS Innovation Accelerator (NIA). The NIA is a partnership programme and aims to create the conditions necessary for proven innovations to be adopted faster and more systematically throughout the NHS. It looks for the best national and international healthcare innovators to deliver examples into practice for demonstrable patient and population benefit.

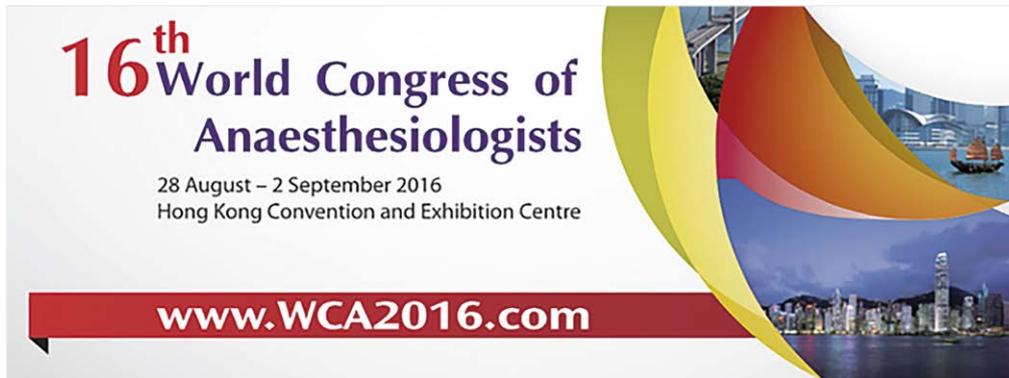
NIA 2016 is now open for applications from the many healthcare innovators within our ranks, it will close on 1 August with successful applicants announced in October. This year, the round of applications will focus on challenges based on population health needs including disease prevention, early intervention and long-term condition management.

For more information, [visit the NIA webpage](#).

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And finally...

The World Anaesthesia Congress 2016

There are just a few months to go until the [2016 World Congress of Anaesthesiologists \(WCA\)](#) opens on 28 August. This year the WCA takes place in the vibrant city of Hong Kong, and I am excited that the College will have representatives attending the four day event. With a significant UK contingent among the 9,000 delegates who attended the previous congress, the College is considering holding a social and networking function at this year's Congress, so do contact us if you would like to be kept informed of developments. Please also look out for the RCoA stand in the exhibition hall, where you can find out about the College's new and expanding international strategy.

Further information on the College's international programme [can be found here](#). As ever, you can contact me if you have comments on any of the issues highlighted in this newsletter, or thoughts on any other matter, using presidentnews@rcoa.ac.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you enjoy the rest of the summer.

Best wishes,
Liam