

News from the WFSA

A lot has happened at the WFSA since the last edition of *Update in Anaesthesia* was published. Perhaps most important is the shift to a more strategic Programme Approach which puts Education & Training, Safety & Quality, Innovation & Research and, finally, Advocacy at the forefront of all that we do.

As this publication attests, it is still very much the continuing education of anaesthesiologists that provides a focus for the WFSA's efforts and we have a worldwide network of members and volunteers that help us respond to this challenge. Special mention must be made of Dr Wayne Morris (Chair, Education Committee) and Dr Isabeau Walker (Chair, Publications Committee) and members of their Committees for their untiring efforts in supporting our work. This is evidenced across our programmes and by the fact that, not only are we publishing a 31st *Update in Anaesthesia*, but also we have available more than 300 *Anaesthesia Tutorials of the Week* on the WFSA site - www.wfsahq.org

The value of these hundreds of educational articles and tutorials is being recognised with improved search facilities on the website (for example allowing archives to be searched by keyword and category), as well as by online sign up and mailing systems that ensures that our readers are informed as soon as new publications become available. We are also developing a more obvious "Resource" Section on the site that points the way, not only to WFSA publications, but also to open source materials from other publishers that we think might be useful to you. We hope that this will move us further along in our ambition for the WFSA site to become a "one stop shop" for anaesthesiologists everywhere, especially those who seek further learning or teaching within the specialty.

Change can also be measured by the increasing number of fellowships now on offer each year, with more than 40 being available through the WFSA at the last count. These fellowships are offered in a range of specialist areas within anaesthesia and each lasting between two and twelve months, depending on the host institution and the subject matter. Most importantly they offer young anaesthesiologists from low and middle income countries extraordinary opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills in a cost effective and impactful manner, making fantastic use of the WFSA global network. Those that are interested in hosting or applying for a fellowship can find out more at <http://www.wfsahq.org/our-work/education-training>

Worthy of celebration is the fact that we have now awarded over 100 WFSA-Baxter scholarships. Since 2008 these scholarships have allowed young doctors, who would otherwise not be able to attend, the opportunity to present posters and take part in World and Regional Congresses of Anaesthesiologists. The scholars themselves attest to the value of these awards with 94% identifying positive impact for patients and 98% saying they would encourage their colleagues to apply. This is remarkable and I can add from my own experience of meeting scholars that these awards bring very real value to the outstanding individuals that are selected.

Moving beyond the education programme, the WFSA is also very proud of the recent publication of the book *Occupational Wellbeing in*

Anaesthesiologists which can be downloaded for free from the website by visiting <http://www.wfsahq.org/our-work/safety-quality>. On the same webpage you can find the *International Standards for a Safe Practice of Anaesthesia*, and the checklist that goes with the Standards (in English and Spanish). There are also some very useful guidelines for tendering for Anaesthesia machines – especially relevant for those of you that do not have access to reliable supplies of oxygen and / or electricity. We also feature Lifebox, the UK based charity of which WFSA is a founder, which is doing so much for Safe Surgery through the distribution of, and training on, pulse oximeters and the WHO checklist.

Other things to look out for include the launch of our Innovation Awards with a focus on initiatives that demonstrate or strengthen the role of anaesthesia in improving surgical patient outcomes. These awards will be made at the World Congress of Anaesthesiologists in Hong Kong 2016, and details about criteria and how to apply can be found at <http://www.wfsahq.org/our-work/innovation-research>. We are also very proud and excited about a new partnership with the International Anesthesia Research Society (IARS) which foresees the establishment of a Global Health Section in the highly respected journal *Anaesthesia and Analgesia* (A&A). This affiliation between WFSA and the IARS aims to focus the attention of the best minds in our discipline on advancing the healthcare of patients worldwide and particularly in resource poor environments.

Finally, let me mention an area of our work that is both a challenge and a major opportunity for anaesthesiology around the globe. In 2015 the World Health Assembly will vote on a resolution entitled, "Strengthening emergency and essential surgical care and anaesthesia as a component of universal health coverage". In his letter to all WFSA member societies WFSA President, Dr David Wilkinson wrote, "If approved, the resolution would change the situation of our profession, and of surgical patients (and those who need surgery) around the world for the better. It is likely that it would also significantly influence the amount of resource made available for anaesthesia, shifting national and donor budgets towards the 11%+ of the global burden of disease that could be addressed by surgery" Dr Wilkinson went on to say: "With the poorest 30% of our world accessing just 3% of the surgery, and with mortality rates from surgical intervention 1,000 times higher in some parts of the world than in others, it is my sincere hope that we are all bound together behind this resolution." This challenge, together with plans to draft Sustainable Development Goals (to replace the Millennium Development Goals or MDGs) therein recognising the impact of surgery and anaesthesia on global health, merits the attention of all of us <http://www.wfsahq.org/our-work/advocacy>.

We hope you enjoy and benefit from this edition of *Update in Anaesthesia*. Of course we have the contributing authors and the editor, Dr Bruce McCormick, to thank for putting such a valuable edition together. They are amongst a highly prized WFSA team that demonstrates, on a daily basis, the impact of volunteers and volunteering. I salute them and am honoured to be part of it all.

Julian Gore-Booth
Chief Executive Officer, WFSA