

+ Beyond the Mask: Interview with Dr. Acharya

Dr. Sanjay Acharya is an Anesthesiologist and Intensivist from Ottawa, who has taken on a number of leadership roles and gone *Beyond the Mask* to help raise the profile of our specialty. He is the Medical Director of the Chronic Vent ward at St Vincent's Hospital, an active provincial coroner, and he covers the ICU at the Queensway Carleton Institute. In addition to those duties, Dr. Acharya is the President of the Medical Staff at the Queensway Carleton Hospital. He serves on that hospital board and is on the Executive of the Academy of Medicine of Ottawa as the Vice President. We had the opportunity to sit down with him to ask about his involvement in leadership roles.



At the May 2015 OMA Council meeting, Dr. Acharya was elected the Vice-Chair of Council. He first became involved with the OMA after attending a PMI training program 9 years ago. It was at this program Dr. Acharya met a group of physicians who encouraged him to become a member of a local OMA branch and since then has worked with a variety of branches. When asked about what influenced his decision to take on leadership roles, “Interest, there is no other answer. You have to be interested in it and you have to be willing to make the time to do it.”

Dr. Acharya is a supporter of the *Beyond the Mask* campaign, but recognizes the challenges Anesthesiologists face when asked to join committees or organizations. In particular, he is familiar with the operational challenges around scheduling, “If you’re going to get Anesthesiologists involved in leadership, it’s going to mean that they are out of the operating room. That’s probably the largest challenge we face.”

One training program in particular inspired Dr. Acharya to apply direction to his leadership objectives. During his yearlong training with the Schulich CMA leadership program, one of his professors taught him about focus, “he said... you know Sanjay it took me awhile to figure out, but I realized this is the goal I was working towards and every ask- did it get me closer to my goal, or did it not.” Dr. Acharya offers the same advice to upcoming leaders in the anesthesiology community, “If you are going to get involved in leadership, its better- like anything in life- that you do it in a structured format. You need a framework and that framework has to have a goal in mind.”

We look forward to seeing Dr. Acharya excel in his new leadership position. His first meeting as Vice-Chair will be at the November 2015 OMA Council Meeting.