



Ontario's Anesthesiologists

A SECTION OF THE ONTARIO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

SPECIAL EDITION: BEYOND THE MASK



Launch of our New PetalMD Resource Centres

We are happy to announce the formal launch of three Resource Centres (RC) for our section membership: a *General Membership Resource Centre*, a *Chiefs' Resource Centre* and a *Family Practice Anesthetist Resource Centre* (see overviews below). This is in response to feedback from section surveys, where many members supported putting Resource Centres in place to share tools, templates, medical directives and other important resources, as well as to enable open communication with other Anesthesiologists across the province. We chose PetalMD as the platform given it is easily accessible, allows for content to be catalogued in an intuitive manner, has a user-friendly discussion forum and provides additional support structures.

General Membership Resource Centre

Our General Membership Resource Centre hosts a variety of documents and open discussion opportunities captured under such headings as:

- ✓ Health Care in Ontario and Hospital Governance
- ✓ Knowing and Managing Yourself and Leadership High Performance Teams
- ✓ Basics of Hospital Finances
- ✓ Quality, Safety and Risk Management
- ✓ Order Sets, Clinical Domains and Protocols
- ✓ OMA Section Documents... and much more

Chiefs' Resource Centre

In addition to the topics and resources listed in the General Membership RC, the Chiefs' Resource Centre provides the opportunity for Anesthesiology Chiefs to engage in discussions with other Chiefs across the province, talk about issues and share resources unique to the work associated with managing a hospital department.

Family Practice Anesthetist Resource Centre

The section recognizes the importance of fostering Family Practice Anesthetists to develop as a community. Through our distinct FP-A RC, we are providing additional materials distinct to FP-A practice as well as an opportunity for FP-A's to connect and network.

Our *Membership RC* is an expansion of our *General Membership RC*, launched a few years ago, so we already have 333 members registered to that group. Our *Chiefs' RC* was launched last Spring, and we have 80 active chiefs using the site. And our FP-Anesthetist page is new. Invitations to Ontario FP-A's will be sent out in the coming week from PetalMD. ***If you would like to be added to the appropriate group/s, please email our section administrator, Emily Hill, for more information.***



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PERI-OPERATIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Developing Peri-Operative Leaders: Knowledgeable, Collaborative, Effective

One of the main objectives of the BTM initiative is to develop the leadership capacity of section members. The OHA partnership is an exciting development, providing us with extensive expertise in such critical areas as design and delivery of quality leadership development programs. Proof of this new partnership was the success of the inaugural offering: a one-day Peri-Operative Leadership Program: *Strategic Leadership in a Reform Environment*, held in Toronto November 4th, 2017. A big thank you to all members who attended and provided helpful, future focused feedback. And a special thanks to OMA Practice Management & Education for their sponsorship.



Our first offering, held at the OHA's incredible Education Centre, was designed to be different from other existing leadership opportunities. Understanding all aspect of the health system, through a "primer", and interactive sessions replicating "real life" experiences provided the foundations for participants to practice the act of leading change. In addition, there was excellent dialogue and a greater emphasis on the importance of anesthesiologists in leadership positions serving as the interface amongst the many professionals involved in providing patient care. We had wonderful facilitators for the day:

- Dr. Gillian Kernaghan, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Health Care in London, who provided a wealth of information on Ontario's health care system, funding reform and hospital structures
- Anesthesiologist, Dr. Michael Sullivan from Southlake Hospital, who ran an engaging and interactive session on Anesthesiologists as Interface Professionals; and
- Eileen Terry who provided some interpersonal and self-awareness reflection during the afternoon with a session on collaborative leadership and fostering hospital-physician alignment.

Through offerings such as this, the section is striving to provide members with different development opportunities that help lay the foundations for entry into and/or greater success in positions of influence in any number of settings. Without ignoring the obvious challenges of our current medical-political climate, the Executive would prefer to continue to be positive and future-oriented. We are trying to stay above the fray, so to speak, and position Anesthesiologists as participants, influencers and leaders in our changing health care system. Hence, one of the initiatives for 2018, is to explore the possibility of offering a tailored leadership certification for anesthesiologists, while continuing to offer further stand-alone programs. Target audiences remain current, as well as up and coming, anesthesiology leaders.



PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

"Congratulations to Ontario's Anesthesiologists and the OHA for organizing a unique education opportunity. This day was suitable for anesthesiologists at all stages of their career in a variety of roles. Many useful insights into hospital structure and funding and anesthesiologist's unique role. Great group participation. Highly recommend making this a regular event."

"This program was an excellent opportunity to learn more about the structure of Ontario's Healthcare System and the stakeholder's involved. If you want to learn more about the key stakeholders and the roles they play in Ontario's Healthcare, I highly recommend this informative session."

BEYOND THE MASK INTERVIEW

Dr. Nadia Alam



Interviewed by Dr. Jane Cooke-Lauder, BA, MBA, DM, CMC, BTM Strategic Consultant, and Emily Hill, the Section's Administrative and Communications Coordinator

Don't challenge Dr. Nadia Alam if you really don't want something to happen. Her defining retort is "Why not?" And she then proceeds to accomplish what others have suggested is not possible. Her journey into medicine began in just that way. One of her father's friends, on observing the girl child (Nadia) in the room, unwittingly threw down the gauntlet by suggesting to her father that he "would now never get the doctor he wanted". Proof that not only boy-children become doctors followed with her acceptance into Medical School at Dalhousie, the first in her family to attend a Canadian medical school, and then graduation from Queen's Family Practice Anesthesiology (FP-A) program. Now practicing as an FP-A in Georgetown, Nadia has emerged as a strong voice for physicians. She has an effective presence on social media and is the president-elect of the Ontario Medical Association.

Language, words and cadence define and depict Nadia. A self-described writer at heart, her earliest ambition was to be awarded the Nobel Prize in English Literature. What she says has tended to resonate with others, increasingly so over the last number of years since physicians in Ontario have been without a compensation agreement and subject to arbitrary pay cuts. It was following such a pay cut announcement that a pregnant Nadia, facing an insufficiently funded maternity leave, was encouraged by her husband to 'get active'. Correspondence with her local MPP led to a visit and to a steady social media stream, including blogs that were picked up by the Huffington Post as well as other newspapers. "My aim was to help other people understand physicians the way that I see them: as beautiful, nerdy, compassionate, reasonable, collaborative, with big and all-encompassing hearts" and also to make the public and the government more aware of the limitations of the current system.

Her message was compelling- the system is in trouble and alienating physicians is the worst possible way to fix it

Nadia's comfort zone is as an advocate, a route that she strongly recommends to other physicians. She encourages her physician colleagues, when passionate about a specific issue, to create a message, identify the medium and have the courage to step forward. "Imagine the agency within yourself and that what you say matters. Be limitless". Stay away from labels, be human and be prepared to be scared. "There is that gut wrenching experience of the first day of being published by name: will anyone read it? Will they ridicule it? How best to handle the criticism so as to learn and grow? But you need not be alone." Speaking from experience, she indicated that senior leaders do reach out, seeing themselves in these younger physicians, and are ready to offer mentorship and guidance.

Her skill with words, together with her ability to get things done, has resulted in a number of leadership roles, including class president in medical school followed by chief resident during residency. "I fell into leadership positions. I did not seek them out. But at the same time, I could not ignore the opportunity since physicians really need the change. It would have been irresponsible to do so". And yet, Nadia finds the word 'leadership' to be loaded. Leaders have a responsibility to their communities; leaders are expected to do something with the influence they have garnered. Leadership can feel like a burden. It is frightening as other people are watching and judging. "Most identified leaders are male. Women do leadership differently, through teaching, educating, creating social networks of influence, influencing. I did not go into the profession to be in the public eye. I prefer to stay unaware of the influence I have – even though my friends are laughing at me."

Nadia may prefer to be unaware of the influence she has. But others are not. The shift to medical politics occurred after she was asked by popular TV host, Steve Paikin, as to when she intended to run for political office. Recognizing that this would mean giving up being a doctor for a world that she didn't respect, her decision was to become an even more influential voice, a voice for positive change, from within the healthcare system. An early realization was that she needed to start putting forward solutions and in developing these solutions: "I could apply my physician training to the ailments of the healthcare system that increasingly, I was coming to believe, was experiencing

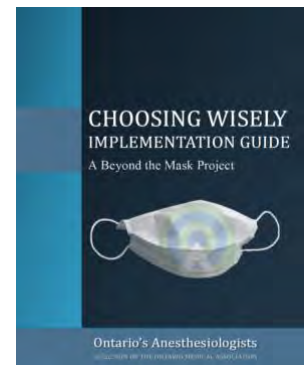
its biggest transformation since the 1960s. I think the system as it was constructed in the 1960s is unsustainable since it doesn't match what the 21st century needs." With no medical politics mentor, she brought together a support network of physician and non-physician friends who both challenge and support her. Staying open to possibilities and looking beyond the conventional wisdom are hallmarks of her creed, a creed that also recognizes the importance of being well informed. Completing a Masters' program in the UK that covers the design of health systems around the world is thus a 2018 objective. "Given the complexities of the situation, a single payer system is likely not sustainable. Too many patients are slipping through the cracks. Collaboration, including horizontal networking and engagement with patients, is required as is an understanding of the myriad of interdependencies. It will take a big village to figure out and implement the solution or solutions". One of her major concerns is that "as physicians, we have become used to so many 'new norms': we are like frogs in the pot of boiling water not recognizing that we need to jump out. Physician burnout is at new heights. And yet, in order to lead this change, we must be able to imagine a different future that encompasses all parts of the system".

This self-described 'scrappy boxer' is changing the dynamics of medical politics. Many of Ontario's physicians see themselves in her stories and are mobilizing, recognizing that a revolution is taking place. Nadia remains confident that if she can speak out, so can others; that the torch will be passed on and truth will continue to be told to power. While she describes physicians as a "strange tribe, vulnerable behind our work, overworked and often fractious with each other," she also sees common stories and an increasing ability to pull together as witnessed by the expanding working relationships between FP-As and Anesthesiologists. In closing, she exhorted her colleagues to "do what is necessary to make your own lives, AND those of your patients, better". Given her track record, it may not be wise to bet against this force of nature and her determination to improve the healthcare system through the engagement of physicians.

We thank Nadia for her dedication to medicine, leadership and advocacy and look forward to hearing about her continued support for physicians in Ontario.

Choosing Wisely Updates - CAS CWC Recommendations

CW Implementation Guide: Section Chair, Chris Harle, was invited by Choosing Wisely Canada to provide an overview of the process of developing the Implementation Guide on Thursday December 7, 2017 as part of the ongoing series, *Choosing Wisely Talks*. Click here to access the recording. Following the successful launch to members over the summer, we are seeking ways to share this work nationally and, as requested by section members, to continue to update and promote it provincially. Stay tuned for updates and in the meantime, should you have any questions or want to share a CW implementation story, please get in touch with Emily.



Health Quality Ontario Reports: Health Quality Ontario released the latest Hospital Performance Series report on December 4th, 2017. The report features hospital-level data to support the reduction of unnecessary pre-operative tests for low-risk surgeries, which is aligned with Choosing Wisely Canada recommendations.

These reports were emailed to hospital CEOs. They include comparative provincial data, suggested change ideas to support hospital-specific quality improvement efforts, and also a new year of data: April 1st, 2016- March 31, 2017. To learn more about the report, visit: www.hqontario.ca/hospitalreport. If you are interested in receiving your hospital's report, please contact hospitalreport@hqontario.ca

Meet Your Beyond the Mask Working Group... Dr. Kyle Kirkham

Dr. Kyle Kirkham has been an instrumental member of our Beyond the Mask working group since joining in 2016. He was one of the lead advisory committee members for the development of our *Choosing Wisely Implementation Guide*. Kyle has also been influential in our networking and engagement efforts. He is the CAS Choosing Wisely Canada Chair and sits on the Ontario Surgical Quality Improvement Network and Choosing Wisely Ontario provincial steering committees. Kyle has connections with the HQO surgical quality improvement program, is engaged at the Ontario Medical Association and a strong advocate for our Beyond the Mask initiative.

Dr. Kyle Kirkham trained as an anesthesiologist at the University of Toronto and obtained a fellowship in regional anesthesia at Toronto Western Hospital. He is currently a lecturer at the University of Toronto in the Faculty of Medicine. He is the director of the Anesthesia Preadmission Clinic at Women's College Hospital where he works to implement the quality improvement efforts that the BTM campaign has championed. We thank Kyle for stepping up and going Beyond the Mask and we look forward to his continued support in 2018!

