



2018/2019 Beyond the Mask Update

Dear Members,

Over the past 12 months, members of the Beyond the Mask Working Group have been busy with a number of projects (see below) designed to demonstrate the value that anesthesiologists are adding to the health system across Ontario as innovative and collaborative system and peri-operative leaders.

As you know, the BTM strategic initiative is scheduled for evaluation in 2020. We thank everyone who completed our recent survey about the BTM initiative and what comes next. The results of that survey will be shared during the Annual General Meeting, which will take place on Friday, September 27, during the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting.

Pain Management Project

Anesthesiologists are making important contributions across the province in addressing the current opioid crisis. The Section is working on a multi-phase app that will give healthcare providers the latest, evidence-based recommendations for post-operative pain management, alongside relevant patient education materials.

This summer, Action Group members completed a review of seven recent best practice studies to develop the database that will power the app. We have also identified and are in the process of screening several experienced and respected app developers.

Endorsements of the project from leading health and medical organizations provincially and nationally have been collected. Next steps include connecting with potential funders. While the OA Executive is committed to funding the PMP app, the large and complicated scope of this project sets up the need for external assistance. We will update you on the progress of this project in the Winter edition of our Newsletter.

Leadership Development Days

2019's first leadership development day took place on Saturday, May 13, at St. Michael's Hospital's Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute in downtown Toronto. Titled *Anesthesiologists as Change Leaders: In the OR and Beyond*, it saw nearly two dozen Ontario anesthesiologists learn the approaches and tools needed to effect or lead change, both big and small.



The day featured a keynote talk by TAPMI medical director Dr. Tania Di Renna, and a panel featuring Dr. Paul Gill, Dr. Sanjho Srikandarajah and Dr. Susan O'Leary (panelists pictured to the left) who all shared their journeys as change leaders. In addition, participants worked in small groups on their individual change plans, supported by faculty members.

Our next leadership development day will take place on September 26. Anchored by Dr. Gillian Kernaghan, President and CEO of St. Joseph's Health Care London, it will educate participants on Ontario's evolving healthcare system. If you are keen to attend this event, [please email us](#) as a couple of last-minute spots may be available. We look forward to hosting future leadership development days in 2020.

Oji Life Lab Pilot

At last year's OAM, the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) was showcased given its impact on us individually, on our working environment and on patient outcomes. The Section entered into an arrangement with Oji Life Lab to pilot its [Emotion Life Lab app](#), and nearly 50 Ontario anesthesiologists agreed to test out this innovative tool. Earlier this summer, that pilot wrapped up. Participants who spent a significant amount of time in the app did report noticeable improvements to their EI. However, the majority of participants struggled to make time for the app, and no one completed all of its 10 steps. We still believe firmly in the importance of building individual resilience and are working with Oji on different approaches to meet Section Members' needs.

Introducing the Ontario's Anesthesiologists App



We're thrilled to announce that the official Ontario's Anesthesiologists app is now available in both the Apple and Android stores.

This free-to-download app is designed to be a "one-stop shop" for all things related to the practice of anesthesiology in Ontario. Here you'll be able to read the latest Section news, find out about upcoming CME-earning events and browse through the new and improved Resource Centre, which contains important tools and documents on healthcare in Ontario.

The app also contains spaces where you can ask (and answer) both clinical and administrative questions and share work conducted by yourself, your colleagues and your centres.

Please note that in order to restrict the app to anesthesiologists who live and/or work in Ontario, there is a two-form verification process. After initially joining the app, please be sure to also complete the second form so that we can grant you full access to the app.

The app is a work-in-progress and we look forward to growing and expanding it over the coming months. If you have any ideas or suggestions, or if you run into any problems signing up for the app, [please let us know](#).

Apple Users Download Here

Android Users Download Here

Thank you to the members of our Beyond the Mask Working Group! Your time, support and dedication are vital to the work that we do.

To meet the members of our Working Group, [click here](#). If you would like to join the BTM Working Group, please contact us

Beyond the Mask at the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting and Conference Weekend

We hope you can join us on September 28!

We're excited to share with you our speaker line-up for the annual Beyond the Mask session at the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting. This year's session will take place on Saturday, September 28 from 10:15am until noon and is open to all conference delegates. It has been designed to complement our ongoing Pain Management Project and we believe that you will find it to be a riveting and relevant session that leaves you with new ideas to explore and potentially, put into practice.

You still have the opportunity to register for the OAM. [Click here](#) for more details or scroll to p. 4 of this newsletter.

Our Keynote Speaker



Dr. Ellen Soffin, Anesthesiologist at the Hospital for Special Surgery, New York City

The opioid epidemic has highlighted the need to develop and implement effective pain management and opioid stewardship programs. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Soffin, will discuss unique opportunities for anesthesiologists to curb this opioid crisis and how our specialty can contribute clinically, at the hospital and healthcare system level to effect positive change in the crisis.

What attracted you to the field of acute pain management?

As an anesthesia resident, I saw how effective pain management can transform the patient experience and change outcomes after surgery. Using regional anesthesia techniques alone or as part of an analgesic package of care provides highly effective pain control post surgery. However, providing effective pain management without significant medication-related side effects also means patients recover faster with better outcomes. Using regional and multimodal analgesia to facilitate the global recovery of patients after surgery remains one of the most rewarding aspects of my current practice.

Any there any areas of pain management that you would like to see focused on more?

The rising number of patients presenting for surgery who are taking opioids presents significant challenges for acute pain management. We need a much better understanding of how to optimize these patients pre-surgically: should we taper opioids? If so, by how much and how can this be done safely and effectively? Strategies for transitioning patients back to the community, and for preventing new and persistent opioid use after surgery are also key areas for future research and practice improvement.

Our Panelists



Dr. Tania Di Renna, Medical Director at the Toronto Academic Pain Medicine Institute

What areas of pain management have seen significant progress over the past few years? Any that should be focused on more?

There has been significant evolution of the bio-psychosocial model and self-management in chronic pain. With the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care support of academic pain centers, we will eventually see more evidence based studies supporting this. We should also consider using biopsychosocial modalities to help managing acute and subacute pain.

I would also like to see more studies targeted at prevention of chronic pain. Can we prevent it? Can we do anything pre-operatively to help patient's from developing post-operative chronic pain? Can we be more involved in patient selection for surgeries that are indicated for pain?



Dr. Deepa Kattail, Pediatric Anesthesiologist & Pain Physician at McMaster Children's Hospital

What do you hope delegates will take away from the panel?

We are fortunate to have Dr. Soffin at our meeting this year. She has demonstrated leadership in the realm of opioid free peri-operative pain management including significant publications. I think all attendees of the meeting will walk away with inspiration to integrate innovative ideas that will help decrease reliance on opioids. I am interested to hear her experiences in changing culture and implementing change in the operating room setting in order to achieve such goals, since it is key to have buy-in from the peri-operative team, especially surgeons.



Dr. Sanjho Srikandarajah, Anesthesiologist with North York General Hospital

What attracted you to the field of pain management?

Pain is a universal sensation that we can all relate to and is one of the first reasons patients seek help from healthcare professionals. As anesthesiologists, we have a unique skill set and understanding of pain that can help patients. Also, pain management is an opportunity to connect with patients on a deeper level than is usually possible in the OR.

What do you hope delegates will take away from the panel?

I hope that one of the takeaways from this panel is that participants can learn about how they can make a difference in a patient's pain management and experience while in the hospital even if they don't have a background or training in chronic pain. They can take the skills and knowledge they already have and move it out of the OR.



Beyond the Mask



Dr. Ashraf Fayad

Dr. Ashraf Fayad, the Academic Chair of the 2019 Ontario Anesthesia Meeting, is a cardiovascular anesthesiologist and a certified peri-operative echocardiographer based at London Health Sciences Centre, University Hospital. He is a Site Chief for the Department of Anesthesiology and Peri-Operative Medicine, an associate professor and the lead and director of the Peri-Operative Echocardiography/Ultrasound Program at Western’s Department of Anesthesiology and Peri-Operative Medicine. Dr. Fayad sat down recently with Dr. Jane Cooke-Lauder, the Section’s strategic consultant, and Lindsay Kneteman, the Section’s communications and administrative coordinator, to share thoughts on leadership.

Valuing personal growth and development, listening to feedback, seeing emerging themes early and taking action: these are some of the leadership qualities that define Ashraf and what he is bringing to the role of Academic Chair of the 2019 OAM. As the son of two teachers, Ashraf’s deep respect for education was founded at a young age. “I’m really honoured to serve as the academic chair,” said Ashraf, “And am committed to delivering an end product that meets delegates’ expectations.” Having reviewed past conference feedback to understand what delegates enjoyed and where more is wanted and using his extensive experience and connections—he’s a veteran member of the CAS Scientific Committee as well as a former chair of Ottawa’s Winterlude Anesthesia Symposium—he’s put together a list of well-known speakers addressing “the hot topics that every anesthesiology wants to hear about.” In addition, he’s particularly excited about the six different problem-based learning seminars that will provide delegates, most importantly, with the chance to apply new knowledge.

One of the trends that Ashraf spotted early in his career was the opportunity presented by echocardiography to help high risk patients. He took on the role of Lead and Director at the then newly created Perioperative Echocardiography Service and Program (POCUS) at The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) in 2004, when this sub-specialty was still emerging. Ashraf recalled how some of his colleagues questioned whether this unproven program was a misdirection of resources. With the backing and guidance of then-department chair, Dr. Homer Yang, the program survived and in 2006, Ashraf established the Perioperative Hemodynamic Echocardiography (PHE) fellowship at TOH, the first such fellowship in Canada. “It’s rewarding to look back and see how many patients have benefited from this program and how many physicians have been trained through the fellowships. Now echocardiography is an integral part of our practice.” Not surprisingly, Ashraf considers his work with TOH’s peri-operative echocardiography program as his biggest contribution to the field of anesthesiology.

The drive to action and stepping up to responsibility in some ways led to Ashraf’s choice of both specialty and sub-specialty. A short rotation with an anesthesiology resident and he was committed: “I realized that the anesthesiologists were really the ones running the show,” given their extensive knowledge, about surgical procedures, the medical condition of the patient and the general peri-operative environment. Besides being intrigued by the fast pace of the operating room, Ashraf also enjoyed the immediateness of anesthesiology, “Within in a few minutes, you bring that patient to life. I like that, I like to see the changes in the patient.” He recalled how during his fellowship, he would eagerly rush to attend cardiac calls, regardless of the time of day they occurred, in order to see and learn as much as possible. “I always loved cardiac physiology and the challenges of cardiac surgery cases. I like making decisions in a short space of time.”

He recalled growing up and hearing about the healthcare challenges that the Middle East faced, “My parents would talk about how there was a lack of qualified physicians to save lives.”

This drive to action is tempered by the recognition of the importance of not jumping to conclusions, especially when leading a cross-cultural team. Living, studying and working in a number of different regions including the Middle East, Europe and North America, as well as a number of different institutions, has led Ashraf to respect how important understanding the context and the culture is: “Leaders should take their time to understand the problem well.”

Two stints in leadership roles at Abu Dhabi’s then Zayed Hospital, where he was responsible for developing and then implementing policies and creating a reliable system for the open-heart program, was both wonderful and challenging. This was due, in part, to the varied backgrounds of his colleagues. Exploration of mixed patient outcomes in the intensive care unit made him aware of not judging the individual caregivers too quickly and the importance of assessing the situation from all sides.

“In the United Arab Emirates, they recruit from all over the world,” explained Ashraf, “You have people from different cultures and different skills working in one department that now need to deliver one standard of care.” Definitions and understanding of standards of care varied greatly. Believing in the ability of his fellow physicians and their commitment to patient care and safety, and based on the data he had collected, Ashraf’s approach was to talk directly to them as a group, presenting the facts in a non-emotional way, pointing out the patient outcome and providing them with the tools to make the changes going forward. One approach he found particularly effective was to involve the physicians who were struggling in specific areas by having them gather, analyse and present the relevant data. “Engaging them was the best thing I did. They took ownership of resolving the issue,” recalled Ashraf.



This approach of influencing others is also very characteristic of Ashraf's leadership style. He believes that one of the hallmarks of a good leader is being able to lead by example, something he strives to do, whether in a clinical or academic environment. "You want to influence others towards positive outcomes."

This goes hand-in-hand with another trait that he believes all good leaders must have: effective communication skills. He explained that it's vital for a leader to not only be able to give clear, concise directions but also to truly listen, in order to properly understand a problem. "It is difficult to be a good listener and leader without self-awareness," said Ashraf, adding that we all need to recognize our strengths and weaknesses. From there, a good leader can then assemble the right team. Ultimately, "the team is key to leadership." This belief in teamwork is not just lip service. While discussing his new role with the OAM, Ashraf noted without prompting how organizing the meeting isn't a one-man show, "It's a team effort to come up with a great end product."

Doing all these things well requires training. To Ashraf, while yes, leadership is in part an innate quality, it also has to be taught and learned. His passion for leadership was sparked while at TOH, where he discovered how much he enjoyed the responsibilities and challenges that came with his leadership role at POCUS. Following his first stint in the United Arab Emirates, Ashraf acquired an Executive Leadership Diploma at Cornell University, complemented a few years later by Cornell's Executive Leadership for Healthcare Professional Diploma. Besides fulfilling his own personal love of learning, enrolling in these two programs also speaks to Ashraf's strong belief in physician leadership. "To ensure patient safety and the best possible patient outcome, I believe physicians should be in leadership positions," Ashraf said, "Leadership comes with both authority and responsibility. Acquiring the necessary training and experience is crucial."

This year's OAM runs from Thursday, September 26 until Sunday, September 29 at Toronto's Westin Harbour Castle Conference Centre. For more details, keep reading and to register, [please click here](#).

There's Still Time to Register for the Ontario Anesthesia Meeting

Have you registered yet for one of Canada's largest anesthesia-focused conferences? The 64th OAM promises three days of high-quality content from skilled and experienced speakers from across the province. Learn about the latest developments in peri-operative management and pain control, cardiovascular/thoracic anesthesia, pediatric/obstetric anesthesia and more. The OAM is also offering a workshop in point-of-care ultrasound and six different problem-based learning sessions. This **Group Learning** program has been reviewed by the College of Family Physicians of Canada and is awaiting final certification by the College's National Chapter. For more details and to register for the conference and its associated events, [click here](#).

Annual General Meeting

On **Friday, September 27**, join us starting at **2:00pm** for our Annual General Meeting. This always informative event will this year include an important strategic exercise aimed at helping the Section decide its priorities for the five years following 2020 and what should succeed our Beyond the Mask strategic initiative. In order for this exercise to succeed, we need your participation! As part of the agenda, we will be reviewing the results from our recent members' survey (a big "thank you" to everyone who provided input) and demo'ing our new Ontario's Anesthesiologists app.

Also featured will be updates from our Section chair, Dr. Monica Olsen, presentations from our Tariff Chair, Dr. Eric Goldszmidt and Section Treasurer, Dr. Kashif Yousuf and new OMA president Dr. Sohail Gandhi. The AGM will be followed by a reception in the Exhibitors Hall where light refreshments will be served.



Saturday Night Social Event

This year's Saturday Night Social Event will take place at sophisticated Toronto "speakeasy," [D.W. Alexander](#), located a short distance away from the Westin at 19 Church Street. The night includes a range of delicious hors d'oeuvres, including multiple options for vegetarians. There will also be an open bar that includes access to top shelf brands, beer, wine and our fun and tasty signature drinks (plus plenty of non-alcoholic options as well). And let's not forget the amazing company! Mix and mingle with anesthesiologists from across the province in the comfort of an upscale environment that is completely reserved for our party. The fun starts at **7:30pm** and all conference delegates and their guests are welcome to attend this memorable evening.

Purchase your tickets when you register!
Already registered and want to attend? [Just let us know!](#)



Looking for a Change? Visit Our Employment Opportunities Listings

Centres across Ontario are eagerly recruiting for full-time, part-time and locum positions. Stop by [the Employment Opportunities page](#) and see what's available. Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, a 395-funded bed acute care facility delivering all services daily including acting as a Regional Trauma Centre and Cancer Referral Centre for Northwestern Ontario, is particularly eager to recruit support coverage throughout the months of September – December 2019. [Northern Specialist Locum Program](#) remuneration is available.