



WORLD FEDERATION OF SOCIETIES OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS®

WFSA unites anaesthesiologists around the world for the enhancement of patient care

World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists - Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services

WHO Euro Regional Committee, Malta 10-13 September 2012

Background – the WFSA

The World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA) is a federation of 125 national anaesthesia societies, and works closely with regional anaesthesia societies such as the National Anaesthesia Societies Committee (NASC for Europe), the African Regional Section (ARS), the Asian and Australasian Regional Section (AARS), the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation – Association of Anaesthesiologists (SAARC-AA), the Pan-Arab Federation of Societies of Anaesthesia (PAFSA) and the Confederation of Latin American Societies of Anaesthesia (CLASA), and international organisations such WHO.

The objective of the WFSA is to make the highest standards of anaesthesia, pain medicine, trauma management, resuscitation and preoperative/critical care medicine available to all peoples of the world. Our mission is to unite anaesthesiologists around the world for the enhancement of patient care.

Anaesthesia Safety

Safe anaesthesia and surgery are essential components of Public Health Care. Adverse events in healthcare are common, and in-hospital adverse event rates of 3-17% have been recorded (1). The operating theatre is the most common location of adverse events in hospital, and 43% of adverse events are thought to be preventable using current standards of care (2). Adverse events in surgery are estimated to result in 200 000 avoidable deaths in Europe annually, and adverse events in healthcare cost the UK NHS £1BN annually (3,4).

The WFSA wishes to highlight the **Helsinki Declaration on Patient Safety in Anaesthesiology**, which was launched in June 2010 (5). The principle goals of the Helsinki Declaration are to improve the safety of anaesthesia in Europe through the following interventions:

- International standards of minimal monitoring – implementation of WFSA International Standards for a Safe Practice of Anaesthesia 2010 (6)
- Introduction of standard operating procedures for routine anaesthesia and emergency situations
- Implementation of the WHO surgical checklist
- Safe standards for sedation
- Participation in critical incident reporting systems

Anaesthesia safety and the Millennium Development Goals

WFSA Office, 21 Portland Place, London W1B 1PY, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 20 7631 8880 Fax: +44 20 7631 8882

Email: wfsahq@anaesthesiologists.org Website: www.anaesthesiologists.org

Charity Registration Number: The Netherlands 34318914

US Tax Exemption Number (EIN): 13-3211128

Anaesthesia outcomes vary 1000-fold according to local setting, in part due to shortages in essential healthcare workers, training, education, essential drugs and equipment (7).

The WFSA is concerned that the supply of **essential drugs** is protected, including drugs such as morphine and ketamine, and **essential equipment** is available and appropriate to the environment.

An estimated 37% of hospitals in Eastern Europe do not have a **pulse oximeter**, which is highly recommended according to international standards (8). The WFSA wishes to highlight this problem and to seek support for implementation of the International Standards for a Safe Practice of Anesthesia.

Many anaesthetists in low-income countries do not have access to educational materials or to continued medical education. The WFSA wishes to highlight this problem, and to describe some possible solutions. These include distribution of **educational material** such as Update in Anaesthesia, Anaesthesia Tutorial of the Week, and the translation and distribution of books and CD-ROMS. The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland (AAGBI) is a member society of the WFSA and has produced an **e-learning DVD** 'eSAFE' for distribution to low-income countries. The WFSA supports a three-day training course in obstetric anaesthesia for anaesthesia technicians in low-income countries (**SAFE obstetric anaesthesia**). The WFSA sponsors training centres in 11 countries to provide **speciality training** in anaesthesia for obstetrics, paediatrics, cardiac, intensive care, pain and regional anaesthesia. Anaesthesiologists from 22 countries (14 in Eastern Europe) have attended WFSA Teach the Teachers courses.

Isabeau Walker
WFSA Executive

1. Walker IA, Reshamwalla S, Wilson IH. Surgical checklists: do they improve outcomes. *Br J Anaesth*. 2012; 109:47-54.
2. De Vries EN, Ramrattan MA, Smoernburg SM et al. The incidence and nature of in-hospital adverse events: a systematic review. *Qual Saf Health Care* 2008; 17: 216-23
3. Weiser TG, Regenbogen SE, Thompson KD, et al. An estimation of the global volume of surgery: a modeling strategy based on available data. *Lancet* 2008; 372: 139-44
4. Vincent C, Neale G, Woloshynowych M. Adverse events in British Hospitals: preliminary retrospective record review. *Br Med J* 2000; 322: 517-9
5. Helsinki Declaration on Patient Safety in Anaesthesiology
<http://www.euroanaesthesia.org/sitecore/Content/Publications/Helsinki%20Declaration/Text%20of%20the%20Helsinki%20Declaration.aspx> (accessed 27th August 2012)
6. Merry AF, Cooper JB, Soyannwo O et al. International Standards for a Safe Practice of Anesthesia 2010; *Can J Anaesth*. 2010 57:1027-34.
7. Walker IA, Wilson IH. Anaesthesia safety in developing countries: a risk for patients. *Lancet* 2008; 371: 968-9
8. Funk LM, Wesier TG, Berry WR, et al. Global operating theatre distribution and pulse oximetry supply: an estimation from reported data. *Lancet* 2010; 376: 1055-61

WFSA Office, 21 Portland Place, London W1B 1PY, United Kingdom

Tel: +44 20 7631 8880 Fax: +44 20 7631 8882

Email: wfsahq@anaesthesiologists.org Website: www.anaesthesiologists.org

Charity Registration Number: The Netherlands 34318914

US Tax Exemption Number (EIN): 13-3211128