



The newsletter

of the Scottish Multidisciplinary
Anaesthetic Assistants
Development Group



Launch of SMAAD Group website

The SMAAD Group website will be live from Tuesday 29 September 2009. It can be accessed via the NES website using the following link <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/smaad>. Information about the core competencies and the portfolio and the various academic courses supporting anaesthetic assistants in Scotland are easily available on these pages. SMAAD Group is also working to develop a wiki site to share information and learning opportunities.

Apply for Certificates of Completion

Nominated consultant anaesthetists can now apply for certificates of completion for competencies 1–10 and any of the specialist competencies appropriate for your workplace. Applications can be made by downloading the form on the SMAAD Group website or by contacting the Chairman at Heather.Hosie@ggc.scot.nhs.uk. So far 104 certificates for competencies 1–10 have been issued across Scotland and a further 27 anaesthetic assistants have also achieved specialist competencies relevant to their sphere of practice.

Quality Improvement Scotland revisits

QIS published Clinical Standards in Anaesthesia Care Before, During and After Anaesthesia in July 2003 and reported in 2005. The standard for anaesthetic assistance at that time was that all nurses and operating department practitioners assisting the anaesthetist were trained to a level at least equivalent to the Scottish Vocational Qualification Level III in Operating Department Practice which in effect meant that both nurses and ODPs had to have successfully completed ODP training. Only 4 NHS organisations in Scotland met this standard in 2004/5 and it was recognised within the report that profiling of anaesthetic nursing staff needed to be undertaken. Since then QIS has reviewed its standards to recognise the Core Competencies and will be undertaking focussed revisits of all hospitals and health boards during 2009, which gives a sense of urgency to the process of signing off anaesthetic nurses competencies.

Glasgow Caledonian University Course endorsed

Following peer review by members of the SMAAD Group and further clarification at a face-to-face meeting in November 2008, the Group was satisfied that the Anaesthetic Practice Course offered by Glasgow Caledonian University since 2001 met the requirements of the Core Competencies documents. The programme uses suitably trained mentors as clinical assessors and there is consultant anaesthetic input in both theory and practice. Nurses who have completed this course should therefore use their coursework to populate their portfolio, demonstrating continuing professional development and retention of skills since completion of the course. Nominated anaesthetists are therefore invited to apply for certificates of competency for these nurses who have successfully completed this course, with portfolio evidence of continuing professional development.

University of West of Scotland Course endorsed

An application for endorsement was received from the University of West of Scotland in respect of their course delivered from 2008 as it was substantially reviewed at this time to map onto the NES Core Competencies document. Following a similar peer review process and face-to-face meeting in July 2009, with minor modifications and some clarification, the Group again was satisfied that this course meets the requirements of the Core Competencies document for Competencies 1 – 10, 11, 12 and 16. Again anaesthetic assistants who have completed this course prior to 2008 can use their coursework to populate their portfolio and provide further evidence demonstrating their continuing development in order to obtain a certificate of competency from their nominated anaesthetists.

Review of Core Competencies document

The Core Competencies were published early in 2006 and as such is subject to a 5-yearly review. This will be undertaken over 2010 and feedback from nominated anaesthetists, clinical supervisors and anaesthetic assistants will be warmly welcomed. It is obvious, on using the portfolio, that there is a degree of repetition, which will be addressed. It is clear from developments in perioperative care over the last 5 years that some competencies need to be altered or added. Feedback can be made via the website or by contacting Dr Heather Hosie, Chair, SMAAD Group, Department of Anaesthetics, Southern General Hospital, 1345 Govan Road, Glasgow G51 4TF, 0141 201 1658.