

## The newsletter of the Scottish Multidisciplinary Anaesthetic Assistants Development Group

### Reviewing the Core Competencies and Portfolio documents

In line with best practice, the SMAAD group published the first review of the Core Competencies document in 2011, five years after its first publication. It is available for downloading at the NES website at

[www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/4239/anaesthetic\\_core\\_competencies\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/4239/anaesthetic_core_competencies_2011.pdf)

Changes in the document include

- Section 3 - the use of intralipid for rescue in local anaesthetic toxicity
- Section 6 - to include knowledge of implantable cardiac defibrillators in addition to pacemakers
- Section 10 - management of the emergency thoractomy has moved from specialist area in Section 14 to general emergencies as this was felt to be more appropriate
- Section 11 - Obstetrics has seen additional material added
- Section 17 - is now divided into subsections - subsection A comprises anaesthesia for ECT and subsection B addresses anaesthesia in remote locations.

The group will now address the review of the Portfolio document and welcomes any input from anaesthetists and anaesthetic assistants on improving both layout and content. Changes in content will reflect the changes in the Core Competencies document. It is expected that, as part of the usual appraisal process, individuals who have been given Core Competency certificates in the past would address these changes when the portfolio review is published.

### Portfolio goes on line

The current original portfolio document is now available as an interactive PDF available on line at [www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/bythemeinitiative/workforce-development/smaadgroup/portfolioofcorecompetenciesforanaestheticassistants.aspx](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/bythemeinitiative/workforce-development/smaadgroup/portfolioofcorecompetenciesforanaestheticassistants.aspx). It is hoped that this format will be much easier for anaesthetic assistants to complete and update with assessors using password protected electronic signatures to validate each competency. This will save assistants carrying large bulky documents around anaesthetic rooms. Following the publication of the review of the portfolio, which is expected early in 2012, this will also be made available in PDF format.

### Meeting the quality standards

NHS Quality Improvement Scotland National Overview Followup report for Anaesthesia was published in September 2010. One of the selected criteria was anaesthetic assistance, and it was found that both in 2005 and in 2010, dedicated anaesthetic assistants were present for the majority of procedures requiring the presence of an anaesthetist but that not all staff assisting the anaesthetists had achieved the NES core competencies or were qualified ODPs.

Individual reports for your own area can be accessed at [www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/previous\\_resources/performance\\_review/anaesthesia\\_followup\\_reports.aspx](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/previous_resources/performance_review/anaesthesia_followup_reports.aspx)

Within these reports all Health Boards and hospitals had identified dates whereby core competencies were expected to be achieved but follow up by the SMAAD group suggests that the expected time lines have not been achieved. The SMAAD group plans to conduct a survey across Scotland to map progress.

### **Certificates of completion**

Certificates of completion of the first 10 core competencies have been awarded to 328 anaesthetic assistants since November 2008 when Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin became the first hospital in Scotland to have all anaesthetic assistants meeting the Core Competencies. An additional 464 certificates for competencies 11 – 20 have also been issued. This is a great achievement in difficult times for delivering anaesthetic and surgical care but it is estimated there are about 1000 WTE professionals working in anaesthetics in Scotland and so we are still some way from a fully certificated workforce.

During the revisit from QIS it has become clear that there is a degree of confusion over what constitutes satisfactory completion of the competencies. Completion of the core competencies can be achieved either using the portfolio document available on the NES website or by completing one of the recognised courses provided by Health Education Institutions in Scotland. However certificates of competency can only be provided by a signing off process with the nominated consultant anaesthetist in that hospital. Involvement of consultant anaesthetists in this process is a key requirement by the Royal College of Anaesthetists who are endorsing this process in Scotland. The SMAAD group are working with the Higher Education Institutions providing courses to ensure that current students are signed off during their study period but nurses who have completed courses in the past will be required to produce evidence of continuing professional development to their nominated anaesthetists before gaining their certificate. Requests for certificates of competency can be submitted to the Chairman of SMAAD group at [Heather.Hosie@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Heather.Hosie@ggc.scot.nhs.uk) using the blank form available on the SMAAD initiative website at [www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/bythemeinitiative/workforce-development/smaadgroup.aspx](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/bythemeinitiative/workforce-development/smaadgroup.aspx)

### **Change to the SMAAD Group website**

The website address for the SMAAD Group has changed. You can now find it on the NES website pages under initiatives and the search function has changed to make it easier to access the correct links for anaesthetic assistants. Save

[www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/bythemeinitiative/workforce-development/smaadgroup.aspx](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/bythemeinitiative/workforce-development/smaadgroup.aspx) in your Favourites!