Introducing ‘The Scope’

Catlin Nalley

While there has been a growing interest in and shift toward clinic-based and in-office surgical suites, concerns remain when it comes to the efficacy and safety of this setting for minimally invasive procedures. In an effort to address this issue, The Scope – a new media site for anesthesiologists working outside the traditional hospital setting – was created.

“I have found that there is a lack of knowledge and understanding that safe surgical procedures with anesthesia can be performed outside a hospital or ambulatory care setting,” said Meghan Valach, MD, Chief Medical Officer at Mobile Anesthesiologists, while noting the importance of anesthesiologist involvement in these conversations. Dr. Valach cautioned that if anesthesiologists aren’t leading the discussion about how to safely anesthetize patients in the office space, then someone else may do so – at a detriment to our patients.

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“I believe passionately that as this area of medicine continues to grow, the more anesthesiologists are involved in the process, including setting standards for patient safety and quality measures, the better it’s going to be for patient outcomes in the long term,” she continued. “And so, The Scope was born out of this desire to educate stakeholders about office-based anesthesia and has since grown to include discussions and resources on how this approach contributes to value-based patient care.”

Empowering anesthesiologists

This new site aims to educate the healthcare industry on all things related to office- and clinic-based procedures, as well as promote true value-based care. As a part of these efforts, the team at The Scope has three goals:

• Give back control to physicians and patients
• Move toward value-based care
• Push the industry forward

In addition to educational content around those topics, the site also features weekly interviews with the industry’s thought leaders. The Scope Podcast has featured a range of experts, including The Joint Commission’s Chief Medical Officer as well as the Executive Director of the Medstar Institute for Quality and Safety. Additionally, the website’s video library includes firsthand accounts highlighting the impact of in-office procedures. This gives anesthesiologists the opportunity to hear directly from colleagues and patients about their experiences.

The Scope’s blog, which is updated every Thursday, offers anesthesiologists and other stakeholders an abundance of information on a variety of topics. This includes discussions on the role of technology in value-based care, surgical sites, the benefits of in-office procedures, and more.

Dr. Valach also hopes The Scope will shed light on what working outside of the traditional hospital setting can look like for anesthesiologists. She says it’s important that anesthesiologists learn about the third site of surgery, advocate for their patients, and discover exciting career opportunities available in this medical setting.

“In the wake of COVID and the rise of burnout in physicians and anesthesiologists in particular, office-based anesthesia offers a unique arena to practice the art of anesthesia without the traditional hospital schedule and rigorous call demands,” she emphasized. “Taking back control of your career can be rewarding and rejuvenate an anesthesiologist’s love of practicing medicine.”

Building connections

As The Scope continues to grow, Dr. Valach and colleagues will strive to make the site as informative as possible. This includes engaging with physician anesthesiologists and building a network of professionals who want to be involved in these important discussions.

“The point of this site is to further our industry’s knowledge on office- and clinic-based procedures and the vital part they play in health care’s future,” Dr. Valach stated. “To that end, we’re always looking for topics to cover that those in the industry would find helpful and valuable.” You can contact Dr. Valach at mvalach@zzzmd.com with suggestions.

Dr. Valach urges anesthesiologists to share what they want to talk about most as well as their own experiences with the clinic-based arena – good and bad. “When anesthesiologists understand how value-based care is driving decisions and can have a voice, we can create the safest possible environment for our patients from the start,” she said.

To learn more about what The Scope has to offer visit: thescope.zzzmd.com.

Catlin Nalley is a freelance medical writer with a degree in journalism from the University of Maryland. She has 10 years of experience covering a variety of medical specialties.

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