The 2014 BJA/PGA Special Issue: a selection of six educational reviews

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The PostGraduate Assembly (PGA) of the New York State Society of Anesthesiologists (NYSSA), one of the largest international gatherings of anaesthesiologists, continues its strong commitment to innovative approaches to education by once again sponsoring a special issue of the Journal to correspond to the meeting. The PGA has joined with the British Journal of Anaesthesia (BJA) to produce the BJA/PGA Special Issue based on a selection of clinically relevant lectures from the 68th Annual PostGraduate Assembly held in New York City, December 12–16, 2014. The PGA is the premiere international annual meeting with more than 6000 attendees, of whom more than 30% are from outside the USA. This collaborative international project thus represents an opportunity to enhance the educational missions of both the PGA and the BJA in bringing clinically relevant topical reviews to meeting attendees and international readers of the BJA. Again the BJA is sponsoring a Scientific Panel of international experts on a timely topic. The panel this year is on Sedation in Anaesthesia, moderated by Michel M.R.F. Struys, MD, PhD, an Editor of the BJA and internationally known expert in this area. Two of the panelists have contributed reviews based on their presentations as highlighted below.

The BJA, published since 1923, has the second highest Impact Factor of all anaesthesia journals, and a global distribution to more than 14,000 subscribers in 50 countries worldwide. The BJA publishes clinical and laboratory studies with around 11% of submissions from North America. Online usage is global, with more than one-third coming from North America. The BJA, in addition to publishing cutting-edge research, has a strong interest in Continuing Medical Education (CME) and each issue contains one or two review articles that have CME questions online at http://bja.oxfordjournals.org. This common ground between the NYSSA, PGA, and the BJA of providing high-quality clinical updates and education further strengthens our association.

The six educational review articles for the 2014 BJA/PGA Special Issue, selected from the extensive programme offered at the PGA to complement recent publications in the BJA, are presented by respected experts in the subspecialties of anaesthesiology, pain, and critical care. These topical review articles offer the reader a spectrum of clinical topics and acceptable practices, and will also be available free to meeting attendees and regular subscribers on the BJA website (http://bja.oxfordjournals.org) along with the regular monthly journal content.

The following contributors to the PGA have kindly agreed to provide a detailed review of their lectures to supplement their oral presentations (the relevant lectures are indicated by the BJA logo in the PGA Programme). In a Critical Care review, Waters discusses the use of massive transfusion protocols in the management of haemorrhagic shock, including a critical evaluation of the data leading to recent recommendations for higher plasma:red blood cell transfusion ratios.¹ There are two reviews on Neuroanaesthesia. Anastasian² provides a timely update on the anaesthetic management of the patient with acute ischaemic stroke for endovascular intervention, including the impact of arterial pressure management and general compared with local anaesthesia.
Mack provides a clinical update on the anaesthetic management of patients with intracranial haemorrhage, including critical issues such as management of intracranial pressure, arterial pressure, coagulation, fluids and hypothermia. There are two reviews on Clinical Practice broadly relevant to anaesthesiology. Habre and Peták discuss controversies regarding the perioperative use of oxygen, focusing on age-dependent differences in efficacy and toxicity. Sheahan and Mathews, in a contribution originating from the BJA Panel on Sedation in Anaesthesia, review evolving guidelines and approaches for delivering and monitoring sedation. In the Paediatrics section, in a second contribution from the BJA Panel on Sedation in Anaesthesia, Mason discusses the special challenges of procedural sedation in paediatrics from a global perspective.

Our goal is to provide the international anaesthesiology community with updated knowledge and skills that will benefit you and your patients in clinical practice. We hope you again enjoy this BJA Special Issue of clinically relevant reviews as an added bonus to this year’s PGA. We thank the authors for these excellent educational review articles. We also thank those involved in the preparation of this Special Issue at the Oxford University Press, and CSL Behring for their continued financial support of this project.

Authors’ contributions
H.C.H. wrote, edited, and approved the final version. D.W., R.M., and N.R.W. revised and approved the final version.

Declaration of interest
H.C.H. is an editor of the BJA and an editor of Anesthesiology. R.M. is the Editor-in-chief of the BJA. N.R.W. is the Chairman of the BJA Board.

References
1 Waters JH. Role of the massive transfusion protocol in the management of haemorrhagic shock. Br J Anaesth 2014; 113 (Suppl. 2): ii3–ii8
6 Mason KP. Challenges in paediatric procedural sedation: political, economic and clinical aspects. Br J Anaesth 2014; 113 (Suppl. 2): ii49–ii63