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Message from the Chair



Dear RA SIG Colleagues,

2023 has been an exciting time for the regional anaesthesia community in Australia and New Zealand. ASURA has always been a fantastic conference and 2023 in Adelaide was no exception. Huge thanks for the organising committee for their resilience and persistence to bring us ASURA after several COVID related postponements. Our subspecialty group is one which thrives when we meet to teach and learn from each other, and for this reason the social distancing impact of COVID has been difficult. I very much appreciate the opportunity to once again meet up and share ideas with all the regional anaesthesia enthusiasts and I hope those at ASURA enjoyed those same feelings of invigorated regional anaesthesia practice. There is a unique feeling of really positive connection when ASURA happens, and largely this is due to our exceptional community and the fabulous workshop teaching allowing collaborative exchange of ideas. I'm very grateful to everyone who participates in ASURA and makes it such an excellent experience.

ASURA's conclusion in 2023 brought the planned retirement of Dr David McLeod from the RA SIG executive and his chair position. David McLeod was one of the founding members of the RA SIG and holds the distinguished honour of active involvement with every single ASURA over the years, which is a remarkable achievement. David has contributed so much to regional anaesthesia in Australia, and we appreciate all his gentle wisdom and wealth of experience. We will miss David, but also wish him all the best for his future adventures. Nav Sidhu has joined the RA SIG executive after many years of involvement with RA teaching and learning, we welcome him to the committee. We have a full executive committee as well as several soon to be committee members lined up to become involved.

Regional anaesthesia is very fortunate to have many vibrant emerging teachers, speakers and leaders. We welcome everyone interested in involvement with our RA community. There is a RA

SIG What's App discussion group to keep people connected, and we actively invite participation. In this newsletter you can find a QR code to join the chat. I would particularly encourage our female members to consider teaching and speaking roles because we know there are many enthusiastic and skilled regional enthusiasts in our community who may not have considered speaking roles. Learners want to see diversity in their teachers. The RA SIG encourages participation for anybody motivated to be involved, so please connect with somebody from the SIG executive if you wish to participate in a meeting.

Regional anaesthesia is an exciting innovative area of practice and this coming year will bring more fabulous opportunities to learn from each other and share new ideas. Thanks to the newsletter editors and contributors for another informative edition.

Dr Katrina Webster

Chair Executive Committee of the Regional Anaesthesia Special Interest Group

Editors

- **Dr Liz Maxwell**, Auckland City Hospital, Auckland, NZ
 - **Dr Bojan Bozic**, Sir Charles Gairdner, Perth, WA
 - **Dr Andrew Lansdown**, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, NSW
 - **Dr Cassandra Andrews**, Monash Health, Melbourne, VIC
 - **Dr Craig Daniel**, Gold Coast University Hospital, Gold Coast, QLD
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RA SIG Member Profile - Dr Libby McLellan



Dr Libby McLellan

Consultant Anaesthetist,
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital,
QLD

Can you give a quick bio about your current work? i.e. where you work, how long have you been there, what is your main case-mix

I currently hold an appointment as a Staff Specialist Anaesthetist at the Royal Brisbane and Women's hospital, which is the facility where I spent many of my junior doctor years in training, on and off for fourteen years. It is an adult tertiary hospital where I work with a wide case mix including obstetrics. My special interests are of course ultrasound and regional anaesthesia, along with head and neck and reconstructive surgeries. I am also engaged in patient safety and quality matters, and trained in anaesthetic allergy testing.

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- RA SIG Executive Committee profiles



Dr Lim Yean Chin

Adjunct Assistant Prof Lim Yean Chin is a Senior Consultant working at the Department of Anaesthesia and Surgical Intensive Care, Changi General Hospital, Singapore. CGH is a 1,000 bedded hospital that has most specialties except O&G/ paediatrics and cardiac surgery.

Her interest is in the use of ultrasound for regional anaesthesia and other peri-operative applications. She completed a fellowship in regional anaesthesia at Liverpool Hospital, Sydney, Australia in 2013. She was mentored by A/ Prof Alwin Chuan during her fellowship year and became a member of the Australian Society of Anaesthetists RA SIG.

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Dr Peter Hebbard

Clinical Associate Professor, University of Melbourne. Anaesthetist, Northeast Health Wangaratta.

My active interests have stemmed from the use of ultrasound and regional anaesthesia. I described a number of novel ultrasound guided nerve block techniques including lateral and subcostal TAP blocks, retro-clavicular block, supra-inguinal fascia iliaca block and fascia transversalis block.

For several years I have also been developing a device to extend the capabilities of ultrasound guided procedures in musculoskeletal applications. I have now performed over 1200 carpal tunnel releases with this device under ultrasound guidance.

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How I do it - Interscalene block (ISB)

Introduction

Interscalene block anaesthetises the brachial plexus targeting the C5 and C6 nerve roots (which form the superior trunk) and C7 nerve roots (which continue as the middle trunk).

This block is used for surgeries of shoulder, lateral clavicle and proximal humerus.



Dr Ranjita Sharma
Specialist Anaesthetist
Royal Hobart Hospital,
Hobart, TAS

Risks and Side-effects

ISB can have a significant risk of the following:

- Ipsilateral diaphragmatic palsy due to involvement of the phrenic nerve.
- Horner's syndrome due to involvement of the sympathetic trunk.
- Hoarseness of voice due to the recurrent laryngeal nerve involvement.

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Recent research update



Dr Luke Huang
Regional Anaesthesia Fellow at QE2
Hospital
Brisbane, QLD Australia

1. The transversus abdominis plane block in conjunction with intrathecal morphine use after cesarean section in women with severe pre-eclampsia: a randomized controlled trial.
2. Efficacy of Ultrasound-Guided Erector Spinae Plane Block in Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy
3. Migration rate of proximal adductor canal block catheters placed parallel versus perpendicular to the nerve after total knee arthroplasty: a randomized controlled study
4. Comparison between supra-inguinal fascia iliaca and pericapsular nerve group blocks on postoperative pain and functional recovery after total hip arthroplasty
5. Improved outcomes for spinal versus general anesthesia for hip fracture surgery: a retrospective cohort study of the National Surgical Quality Improvement Program

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Prescribing for regional anaesthesia infusions



Dr Lora Pencheva
Consultant Anaesthetist,
Auckland City Hospital,
Auckland, New Zealand

Dr Lora Pencheva has developed a comprehensive, evidence-based guideline for nerve catheter infusion prescriptions at Auckland City Hospital which she has shared with the RA SIG

Continuous nerve blockade is achieved using a percutaneously inserted nerve catheter with its tip lying in close proximity to peripheral nerves or a nerve plexus. Deposition of local anaesthetic via the catheter results in targeted nerve blockade.

This is different from fascial plane catheters where local anaesthetic solution is injected in the plane between two discrete fascial layers. Here, analgesia is achieved by bathing nerves traveling within this space. Analgesic success depends on the volume administered and its spread within those confines.

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RA SIG Meeting Review



ARACUS meeting 2022

Add your own **text** to tell a story or spread the word! You can add hyperlinks, *styling*, and even Personalization Codes!

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ASURA 2023 review

Add your own **text** to tell a story or spread the word! You can add hyperlinks, *styling*, and even Personalization Codes!

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Join our RA SIG members WhatsApp forum

Scan this QR code on the left to join our informal WhatsApp group to chat about all things regional anaesthesia. The group was established at the recent ASURA meeting with the aim to promote relationships,

