The Collaborative Advisory Group on General and Family Practice Anesthesia in Canada (CAGA) was initially formed in September 2002 as a collaboration of the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada, The College of Family Physicians of Canada and the Canadian Anesthesiologists’ Society. Our mandate is to represent the interests of family physician members with a special interest or focused practice (SI-FP) in Family Practice Anesthesia (FPA) and to ensure discussion and communication within The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) and its Section of Family Physicians with Special Interests or Focused Practices, as well as the Society of Rural Physicians of Canada (SRPC) and the Canadian Association of Anesthesiologists (CAS) about the issues relevant to these members.

The most significant issue for us to consider at this time is the possibility of obtaining further formal academic standing for general and family practice anesthesia through The College of Family Physicians of Canada.

The College of Family Physicians of Canada has introduced The Section of Physicians with Special Interests or Focused Practices. This section recognizes that many family physicians have an area of special interest in their practices. The College is exploring the possibility of special recognition for your extra training and experience. This may include some or all of the following options:

1. accredited postgraduate/residency training programs
2. accredited enhanced CME/CPD programs
3. attestations of successful completion of programs
4. examinations
5. certificates of competence
6. special designations

CAGA has applied and been accepted as a “program” under the Section of Physicians with Special Interests or Focused Practices. This is the first step needed in order to pursue further academic standing.

Because family and general practice anesthesia has already attained #1, 2 and 3 above, the next area that we could consider is the possibility of exams, certificates, and special designations.

The first step will to meet with program directors of enhanced skills programs in anesthesia. We would like review the curricula of the different programs to ensure there is consistency so that examinations can be considered.

It is important to note that only physicians who have certification in family medicine (CCFP) would be eligible for exams, certificates, and special designations in anesthesia. Physicians who are not certificants of The College of Family Physicians of
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Canada would have to be certified and for a limited time, the College is offering an alternate route to certification that does not involve an examination.

Examinations could be introduced to evaluate the competencies of family physicians in anesthesia. These examinations could be challenged at the end of a residency or possibly through the practice eligible route.

Certificates of special competence could be awarded to family physicians who have demonstrated competency through an examination or possibly a grandfathering process.

Special designations could be granted to family physician certificants who have successfully achieved a certificate of special competence in family and general practice anesthesia. This would be similar to the CCFP-EM currently available for emergency care physicians.

Some of the other projects and issues that CAGA has been involved with are as follows:

1. Maintaining a website that brings together links and information relevant to general and family practice anesthesia.

The CFPC website is now available and can be viewed at: http://www.cfpc.ca/CAGA/

We plan to modify and update this website in response to suggestions from family and general practice anesthetists. We invite you to submit any suggestions to Monica Agora at monica@cfpc.ca.

2. Promoting Rural-Appropriate Anesthesia CME

We have identified some CME specifically designed for rural anesthetists:

- A biennial course in Vancouver organized by Dr. Ron Ree
  The last Refresher Course for General Practitioner Anesthetists was in October 2009; the next Refresher Course will be in October/November 2011.

- An annual GP Anesthesia day in Banff, January 21, 2011
  http://medicine.ucalgary.ca/files/med/GP%20Anesthesia%20Flyer%202011.pdf

We intend to make these and other similar courses more widely known through the Rural Anesthesia Email List and through our website.
3. Supporting the Rural Anesthesia Listserve

We continue to support the Rural Anesthesia Listserv which enables communication and networking among rural anesthetists. If you are not on the list and would like to be, send an email to Dr. Hal Irvine, the moderator of the list, at irvineh@airenet.com

To find out more, get involved, or provide feedback to CAGA, please contact me or one of the CAGA members listed below.

Sincerely,

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