

# GASOC updates and unique opportunities



**GASOC (Global Anaesthesia, Surgery and Obstetric Collaboration) was established in 2015 on the back of the *Lancet Commission in Global Surgery*. [1] It is a UK and Ireland based professional body that represents over 1,400 surgical, anaesthetic and obstetrics and gynaecology resident doctors with a global following online. Our goal is to increase equitable, ethical and effective resident doctor engagement in global surgery activity and in doing so, strengthen the partnerships we have with colleagues in LMICs and improve outcomes for patients through collaborative training and education.**

## Updates from 2023-24

### Journal clubs

GASOC hosts a regular journal club every two months on the online platform, MedAll, rotating through the specialties of anaesthesia, surgery and obstetrics and gynaecology.

The most recent journal club on 21 August was anaesthesia-focused and looked at two papers on anaesthesia-related maternal mortality in resource-constrained environments and evaluation of practice following SAFE (Safe Anaesthesia for Education) courses in Tanzania [2, 3]. This work was presented by Kotutu Lombe Mulenga and Ayantu Hordofa Benti, anaesthesia residents from Zambia and Ethiopia respectively. All journal clubs have RCoA accreditation for CPD points and catch up content is available through MedAll (app.medall.org). We welcome authors and resident doctors from all over the world to suggest topics and present.

### RCoA GASOC podcast series

In 2023, GASOC produced a [Global Anaesthesia podcast mini-series](#) with the RCoA, capturing the experiences of resident doctors who had worked with the charity Mercy Ships, GADP (Global Anaesthesia Development Partnerships) and a hospital in India (BKL Walawalkar). The final episode focused on medical capacity building, interviewing Michelle White, consultant anaesthetist at Great Ormond Street and long term volunteer with Mercy Ships. For senior resident doctors, an international anaesthetic placement can form part of their SIA (Special Interest Area). For consultants, there is the opportunity to become a Remote Educational Supervisor (RES) for resident doctors undergoing these placements and fellowships.

### GASOC VRiMS anaesthesia courses

GASOC has been partnering with VRiMS (Virtual Reality in Medicine and Surgery) ([vrims.net](http://vrims.net)) since the inaugural VRiMS surgical hybrid teaching course run in Brighton and Kampala in 2022. VRiMS specialises in creating resources for medical training through extended reality technologies [4]. GASOC has organised anaesthetic workshops in Uganda (April 2023), Cameroon and Zambia (January 2024), focusing on advanced airway skills and ultrasound guided regional anaesthesia. This was taught by an all- African faculty including ambassadors from the African Society for Regional Anaesthesia (AFSRA). Plan A blocks were recorded using 360 degree VR technology in French and English. This is freely available from the VRiMS library and the hope going forwards is to have several global hubs live-streaming these workshops.

The feedback from the courses has been hugely positive with changes noted to knowledge, skills and practice from candidates. There is an upcoming workshop planned for Mbeya, Tanzania at the end of October 2024.

These projects have been made possible with the generous grant from the Association's International Relations Committee and have been presented at the World Congress of Regional Anaesthesia meeting (ESRA, 2023), the AFSRA Annual Conference (2023), WFSA World Congress of Anaesthesiologists (2024) and the Association of Anaesthetists Annual Congress (2024).

## Annual conference

GASOC organises an annual hybrid conference. This was attended by 346 delegates (over 70 in person) from 49 countries last year. It is always a great opportunity to hear from inspiring clinicians and organisations regarding their contributions to Global Surgery and to share innovative ideas through our scientific programme and international poster hall.

This year's conference, 'Creating Solutions in a Changing World', was held on 18-19 October in Manchester. We were delighted to partner with the Association to host the inaugural essay prize. We focused on the ongoing efforts and challenges faced by clinicians to provide safe and effective medical care in a constantly evolving world with changes in political, environmental and humanitarian spheres. Our first day featured exciting interactive in-person workshops on a variety of themes (collaboration and emergency response, research in global health, education in global surgery, innovation and surgery in conflict settings). The second day was fully hybrid and all content was recorded and made available for registered delegates.

## Regional events

GASOC has started to hold several hybrid regional events across the UK and Ireland to bring our events closer to you! Our most recent regional event was held in Leeds, Yorkshire, on 16 July with the theme of Innovation. We heard from our ex-GASOC President Will Bolton on frugal innovation, John Dalton and his Ugandan counterparts, Billy Ndiwalana and Henry Luweesi, on minimal access surgery in Mengo Hospital and Bishow Karki on low-cost laparoscopic simulation training in resource-poor settings. Our latest hybrid regional event was held in Dublin, Ireland, on 14 September, featuring talks from Irish doctors for the environment about the impact of climate change on global health. Catch up content is available on MedAll.

## GASOC Global Frugal Innovation Skills course

An online, eight module innovation and research skills course, has been held on MedAll throughout 2023-2024. As part of this, the 'Global Virtual Hackathon: AI and Digital Tech for Global Surgery' was held on the 21 to 22 September, featuring leaders in AI, digital technology and global surgery, alongside dynamic global breakout sessions pitching live project proposals to win funding for a frugal innovations project. Funding is by the RCSEd and supported by Lifebox, MedAll, National MedTech Foundation and ASiT.

### Join us



GASOC is always looking for new ideas and constantly recruiting to keep the committee vibrant, dynamic and fresh. Sign up to our mailing list to stay tuned for any future recruitment rounds.

## The future

### EADP research methodology series

As part of an ongoing collaboration with GADP and EADP (Ethiopian Anaesthesia Development Program) we are working to produce a research methodology webinar series to meet the training needs that have been highlighted by clinicians there for their residents' training. This will be run in conjunction with esteemed medical researchers from around the world through MedAll and is anticipated to go live in Spring 2025.

### Working groups

Four multi-disciplinary, cross-continent working groups have been formed to invite enthusiastic training doctors in the field of research, education, innovation and international engagement. The working groups aim to encourage collaboration, sharing of experiences and engagement in sustainable change in specific areas. GASOC members can join a working group and engage with committee members on different projects. More information can be found on our webpage. <https://www.gasocuk.co.uk/working-group>

### References

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2. Sobhy S, Zamora J, Dharmarajah K, Arroyo-Manzano D, Wilson M, Navaratnarajah R, Coomarasamy A, Khan KS, Thangaratinam S. Anaesthesia-related maternal mortality in low-income and middle-income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Global Health* 2016; **4**(5): e320-7. doi: 10.1016/S2214-109X(16)30003-1. PMID: 27102195.
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4. Virtual reality in medicine and surgery ([vrims.net](http://vrims.net))

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