



# SOCCA: A Growing Community of Intensivists Embracing the Challenges of Modern Critical Care

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The Society of Critical Care Anesthesiologists (SOCCA) is an organization comprising critical care anesthesiologists and additional members who have an interest in critical care anesthesiology. Formerly named the American Society of Critical Care Anesthesiologists (formed in 1986), the name was changed to SOCCA in the early 2000s to better reflect its global and inclusive membership involvement and opportunities. The focus of SOCCA's efforts involves supporting the needs of critical care anesthesiologists who have diverse backgrounds and expertise that encompass the care of patients in the OR as well as critically ill patients in the intensive care unit (ICU). Opportunities for membership engagement in SOCCA continue to expand. We have grown in the past four years from 370 members in 2018 to over 1,150 members in 2023 nationwide and continue to grow. Under the leadership of SOCCA president Michael H. Wall, MD, FCCM, Immediate Past President Miguel A. Cobas, MD, FCCM, President-Elect, Mark E. Nunnally, MD, FCCM, Treasurer Linda Liu, MD, Secretary Brigid C. Flynn, MD, Society Director Vivian Abalama IOM, CAE, eight directors, and two ASA Delegates, SOCCA has evolved its structure and organization to include seven fully functional committees. There are also new workgroups that are more inclusive for the wider community. SOCCA now has an Early Career Intensivists workgroup, a Medical Student, Resident, and Fellows workgroup, the Physicians in Private Practice workgroup, Women in Critical Care workgroup, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workgroup, Critical Care Ultrasound workgroup, and a Research and Medical Education workgroup. These groups are open to all SOCCA members, including medical students, residents, and fellows. The Nominating Committee provides recommendations to the Board of Directors for potential directors and officers of the corporation. The immediate past president serves as the chair of this committee.

The Research Committee is responsible for identifying opportunities for SOCCA to facilitate critical care research by SOCCA members, recommend and triage initiatives and opportunities focusing on critical care research to the SOCCA

board, and triage requests for the SOCCA mailing list. The Research Committee may also advise the SOCCA president on SOCCA recommendations for the AUA/IARS/SOCCA IMPACT Award. The SOCCA Research Committee has moved from strength to strength over the past year. The committee has grown to total 30 members with diverse backgrounds and interests. Under the leadership of chair Matthew Warner, MD, and Vice Chair Shahzad Shaefi, MD, the subcommittees have become more defined and focused on deliverables for the society and beyond. Through the scientific writing subcommittee, 16 review articles on "Current Topics in Critical Care for the Anesthesiologist" have been commissioned, which is slated to be published as a compendium issue in *Anesthesiology Clinics* in spring 2023. The research collaboration subcommittee has done great work, supported by our administration and marketing teams, in developing and launching our expert "Speakers' Bureau," an initiative that has facilitated connections and exchanges for speakers and talks throughout the country. The data subcommittee has published impactful work in *Anesthesia & Analgesia* around the current clinical practice landscape in anesthesiology critical care and a second survey on job fulfillment and burnout accepted in *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, with several more projects to follow, which will continue to bring value to our members (*Anesth Analg* 2023;136:295-307). We very much look forward to moving the SOCCA

mission forward through investigation, connection, and collaborative initiatives that benefit our growing membership.

The SOCCA membership committee led by Drs. Alisha Bhatia (Chair) and Jing Tao (Vice Chair) represents all aspects of the SOCCA membership. The committee serves as the communication avenue between SOCCA leadership and its membership. We are excited to report several accomplishments over the course of 2022. As our membership continues to grow, we strived to have more specific programming to better cater to each intensivist at different stages of their career. Our fellowship subcommittee, led by Chris Choi, MD, created a brochure to distribute to critical care fellows in late spring. This brochure included advice for fellows as they embarked on their careers and opportunities for networking and continued involvement within SOCCA. This subcommittee also hosted another successful job fair for the fellows in the fall, with assistance from senior SOCCA leaders and active SOCCA members in private practice. Next year, they are looking into starting journal clubs for the fellows and introducing more educational content. The Early Career Intensivists Group, led by committee chair Dr. Bhatia, Lauren Sutherland, MD, and Christy George, MD, hosted several gatherings for early-career intensivists of SOCCA. Discussion topics included finding and cultivating successful mentorship, how to "say no," and networking for the introvert. They also hosted a networking event prior to the annual meeting.



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They look forward to having this networking event in person in Denver in 2023 and continuing to host thought-provoking virtual discussions about issues all early-career intensivists face. Our Private Practice group, led by Drs. Frank O'Connell and Pinxia Chen, became more active in 2023. This group hosted several successful virtual sessions with discussion topics related to private practice. We hope to recruit more anesthesiologist intensivists who are in private practice to learn more about how the society can better cater to their needs. 2022 was also the first full year of the SOCCA Mentorship Program, now being led by Drs. Suzanne Bennet and Michael O'Connor. This new program has paired residents, fellows, and early-career intensivists with senior SOCCA board members. Throughout the year, our committee follows up with each pair to ensure a successful partnership. We would like to encourage all ASA members to reach out if they are interested in any of the programming mentioned to become more involved! We are always looking for ways to improve every member's experience.

The Education Committee is one of the largest committees under SOCCA, with over 30 active members. The committee is divided into various subcommittees that are involved with the planning and organization of the annual conference, preparation for and overseeing the board review course, curating the SOCCA webinar series, and planning for the upcoming release of enduring CME. The education committee is chaired by Allison Dalton,

MD, and Dr. Kunal Karamchandani is vice chair. Both are also co-chairs of the 2023 SOCCA Annual Meeting program. The program planning subcommittee has been actively involved with the planning of the first in-person annual meeting since before the pandemic. The SOCCA Annual Meeting will take place in Denver in April 2023 and will showcase novel educational panels, innovative member research, and opportunities to network with leaders in anesthesia critical care. The webinar program started during the pandemic continues to engage the membership, and we recently concluded the 2022 webinar series. The subcommittee, chaired by Dr. Ranjit Deshpande, MD, FCCM, has formulated a series of six webinars for 2023 that span topics ranging from investigations into the origins of critical care and discussions around the challenges associated with caring for transplant patients, to discussions around the expanding roles of the anesthesia intensivist. Webinars are open to SOCCA members and non-members alike. The subcommittee on the board review course is chaired by Brian Wessman, MD, and recently completed another successful board review course. This course is taught by 30 early-career faculty members who present on board-relevant topics. This year, the course was attended by over 80 participants. The journal CME/enduring content subcommittee, chaired by Aalok Kacha, MD, PhD, has compiled a repository for CME articles, which should be published online in the coming months.

Over the past two years, our Communications Committee has been hard at work engaging with our current membership and promoting an ever-expanding catalog of workgroups and committees, as well as discussing cutting-edge literature and clinical questions on social media with colleagues. The committee is currently led by Chair Brent Kidd, MD, and Vice Chair Madiha Syed, MD, after assuming the roles in 2021 from Immediate Past Chair Craig Jabaley, MD. Through their collective leadership, SOCCA has seen a significant increase in web traffic (approximately 70% increase) and social media followers (around 250% increase) while meeting the growing promotional demands of society. As we move into 2023 and beyond, the Communications Committee is excited to further expand our presence on social media as well as publish the “Interchange,” our flagship quarterly collection of articles relevant to the growing field of anesthesia critical care medicine. We are optimistic that the expanded opportunities within the society will both retain and attract a diverse membership and that our committee will continue to expand SOCCA’s outreach to the medical community at large.

Clinical ultrasound training during fellowship has become integral to the con-

temporary anesthesiology intensive care medicine training experience. However, while several international societies have published consensus statements detailing core competencies in critical care ultrasonography, there still exists a lack of standardization regarding trainee education among the various critical care fellowship programs. As a result, a wide variation may exist in how fellowship programs accomplish ultrasound training. The Program Directors Council’s Subcommittee on Critical Care Ultrasound (CCUS) was formed to address this lack of uniform ultrasound teaching in the current anesthesiology critical care education landscape. The subcommittee comprises fellowship program and associate program directors with expertise and interests in critical care ultrasonography. This subcommittee is chaired by Drs. Louisa Palmer and Lee Goeddel, and it aims to explore the current state of ultrasound teaching methodologies in anesthesiology critical care medicine fellowship programs, develop consensus recommendations on ultrasound education, and promote multi-institutional collaboration. One of the earliest successes of the multi-institutional collaborative, facilitated by the subcommittee, has been the curation of a manuscript on perioperative point-of-care ultrasound, “POCUS: A Moving Picture is Worth a Thousand Tests,” slated to be published in the forthcoming volume of *Anesthesiology Clinics*. In the upcoming year, the subcommittee plans to conduct a web-based survey of the fellowship program directors to understand the general barriers to implementing ultrasound training at the programmatic level, the attributes of existing training structures, and how competency is defined at the program level. The group hopes to utilize the survey results to develop standardized curricula and pragmatic training frameworks in ultrasound education that any fellowship program in the nation could adopt.

The Program Director Advisory Council consists of 92 members in the role of Program Director, Associate Program Director, Education Director, or SOCCA Board Member. The Council’s mission is to create a collaborative, collegiate group of educators that are focused on enhancing fellowship training in critical care and supporting the growth of the field of anesthesia critical care medicine. One of the main goals of the Council is to organize, create policies, and certify the match process for the ACCM Fellowship Programs. The goal over the next two years is to work closely with ACTA, SCA, and SOCCA leadership to develop a streamlined process for these applicants in a combined-match approach. Peggy White, MD, will lead the initiative on a survey of current residents to try to understand the decrease in applicants into the field of ACCM. Dr.

Brian Wessman, MD, FACEP, FCCM, is a vital member of the Recruitment and Membership Committee who is an advocate for the needs of the Emergency Medicine residents pursuing ACCM fellowship. We currently have 38 out of the 63 active fellowship programs listed as ABA-approved, two-year ACCM-EM training programs. In line with our focus on recruitment and visibility of our specialty, the Social Media Subcommittee had a record showing of ACCM Fellowships highlighted on Twitter during the recruitment season. This subcommittee, led by Drs. Ameeka Pannu (Chair), Nazish Hasmi (Vice Chair), and members Drs. Christina Hayhurst and Tom Jan, has been very successful in enhancing our social media presence. This year, they will again organize fellowship program spotlights and are working on a resource for new program directors on ways to jump start a social media presence. The Research and MedEd Subcommittee led by Dr. Jason Brainard, MD, continues to lead the way on fellowship education initiatives. Members of this subcommittee are collaborating with SCCM in efforts to build a common set of competencies for all critical care training programs. Future areas of interest include consortium projects, medical student and resident curriculum, and program resources related to Milestone 2.0. At this time of year, our members are busy with application review, virtual interviews, and rank meetings. Drs. Erin Hennessey (Chair) and Babar Fiza (Vice Chair) look forward to serving our members with support and enthusiasm for another season of recruiting the next generation of critical care trainees. The group has also contributed three articles for *Anesthesiology Clinics* as well as collaborated on an upcoming webinar on recruiting women into CCM.

The new SOCCA Clinical Practice Committee will coordinate all clinical practice activities within SOCCA. There are several subcommittees under Drs. George Williams and Gozde Demiralp. Currently, the subgroups are Quality and Safety Subcommittee, MCS/ECMO/CTICU Workgroup, Transplant Critical Care, Neuro Critical Care, and Physiologically Difficult Airway (PDA). The committee will guide, motivate, and ignite each workgroup’s annual strategic plans and projects. Through each workgroup, agreed-upon annual goals will be achieved via monthly gatherings, which will serve as ground for mentorship, partnership, and friendship among members of our own society. CPC will also provide resources to elevate SOCCA’s national presence by supporting more of members’ contributions to clinical practice by creating guidelines and consensus on daily challenges. This committee aims to provide a source of reference for the practicing critical care anesthesiologist in matters around clinical work.

The pandemic and its fallout have shown our community’s crevices with high rates of burnout. Women intensivists have been facing the brunt of many of these issues. Under the leadership of Drs. Shahla Siddiqui and May Hua as well as a steering committee, a Women in Critical Care group was formed in 2022. Both SOCCA members and non-members are welcome, although within one year of joining we will expect non-members to make a membership commitment to SOCCA. Women in Critical Care is aimed at delivering academic advancement, networking, and a social community to anesthesia-trained women in critical care, as well as others who wish to advance women in academics. In the past year, several Fireside Chats featuring leading women in critical care medicine from across the world have delivered motivational interactive discussions, as well as a webinar on wellness. These talks are available on the WICC website ([asamonitor.pub/40oBnk1](http://asamonitor.pub/40oBnk1)). Through surveys and a white paper on recommendations for organizations and societies on women in critical care medicine, WICC aims to expand the dialogue around gender disparity and mitigate the issues of harassment and burnout among women. At the same time, they also plan academic content including several panels submitted from WICC for various scientific meetings and a future mini podcast series on topics of general interest.

We have also started a new Service Chiefs Advisory Council chaired by Dr. Jabaley, vice-chaired by Anne Drewry, MD, MS, and Sheida Tabaie, MD, as secretary. This group is also open to all SOCCA members. It will focus on challenges and opportunities for those in critical care leadership positions in both academic and private practice such as academic division directors, medical directors, service line directors, executive medical directors, etc.

SOCCA has grown from a small group of like-minded clinicians practicing CCM in the 1980s to a large international society fostering the growth and advancement of a varied group of clinicians. We strive to provide a voice for critical care anesthesiologist intensivists while at the same time embracing the multifaceted areas of expertise that our members bring in. It is our vision to provide a wide selection of opportunities to motivate and to build community among intensivists from an anesthesiology background. Please consider joining us and help us grow this tribe – visit [socca.org/soccamembership](http://socca.org/soccamembership)! ■

**Disclosure:** Dr. Khanna is a consultant for Caretaker Medical, Edwards Lifesciences, General Electric, Hill Rom, Medtronic USA, Inc., Philips Electronics North America Corporation, and Potrero Medical, and is a grant recipient of Edwards Lifesciences, Potrero Medical, and Trevena Pharma.