

A 2024 Update from SOAP

May C. M. Pian-Smith, MD, MS

Kristen L. Fardelmann, MD

For more than 50 years, the Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology (SOAP) has been the beacon for advancement and excellence in obstetric anesthesiology. In today's quickly evolving world, SOAP continues to adapt while maintaining our core focus of research, education, clinical excellence, professional development, diversity and inclusion, and ensuring our steadfast commitment to advancing and advocating for the health of the pregnant patient and their babies. Now with more than 2,000 active members who provide maternal and newborn care globally, SOAP has created a network of individuals dedicated to improving maternal and neonatal health outcomes. We are excited to present this 2024 update on the activities of SOAP.

Membership

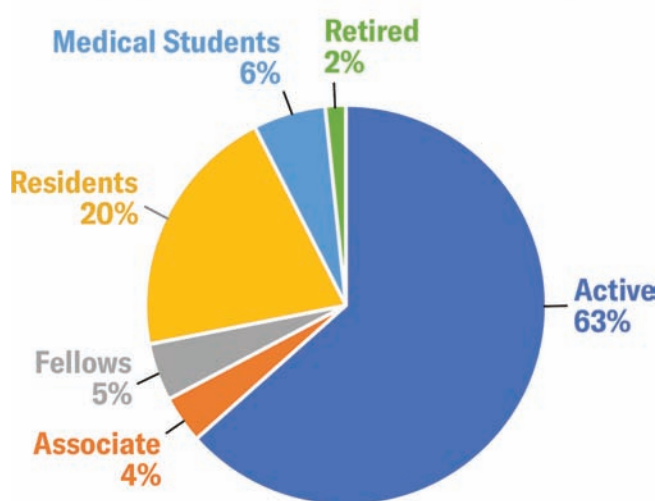
Our community's diverse membership of anesthesiologists and health care professionals is the heart of our society. Our members are action-oriented collaborators, diligently and energetically engaged in all society pursuits. Today, SOAP appeals to all through promotion of personal and professional growth and sharing of experiences, perspectives, and expertise with the goal to reach and impact all professionals caring for the pregnant patient globally in every phase of their career.

Current membership numbers:

- Active = 1,299
- Associate = 79
- Fellows = 95
- Residents = 422
- Medical Students = 120
- Retired = 34

To reflect our diverse membership, SOAP expanded our Special Interest Groups (SIGs) in 2023. SIGs are member-initiated and member-led groups that explore areas of interest within obstetric anesthesiology, including: Environmental Sustainability on the Labor and Delivery Unit, Fetal Surgery, Maternal Health Inequities, Maternal Mental Health and Birth Trauma, Medical Students and Residents, Obstetric Anesthesia

SOAP Membership



Physician Wellness, OB Critical Care Medicine, Placenta Accreta, Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS), Private Practice, and Simulation and Recovery after Childbirth. Over the past year, we have seen an 87% increase in participation in this complimentary offering for SOAP members. Proposals for additional SIGs continue to be submitted, demonstrating the relevance of these group interactions for our members.

In 2022 and 2023, the triannual SOAP Newsletter format diversified to showcase all members' voices, highlighting their meaningful perspectives and ideas. Publications feature member-submitted articles that range from clinical content and research studies to personal creative writing and poetry. The newsletter reflects the wholeness of our members and is meant to share the all-encompassing experiences of professionals in today's health care landscape.

Our new online SOAP community platform, Tradewing, brings our society's collective knowledge to each member's fingertips by providing a platform for discussion of clinical topics, sharing of resources, providing peer support, and calling attention to newsworthy publications and events. Through the creation of a community profile, members can professionally network with colleagues.

Education

SOAP's diverse educational offerings have expanded to include year-round content designed for patients and all health care professionals who provide care to the pregnant patient: anesthesiologists,

CRNAs, certified anesthesiologist assistants, obstetricians, maternal-fetal medicine specialists, midwives, and more. The offering of virtual content has allowed us to serve our members in more flexible ways wherever they may be located geographically.

The Sheraton Downtown Denver Hotel, in Denver, Colorado, will host the SOAP 2024 Annual Meeting, May 1-5. Centered on the theme "Focusing on the Patient: Improving Individual Outcomes & Experiences," it will feature cutting-edge research presentations combined with engaging clinical updates focused on the patient experience. This classic learning and networking event for all those who practice in or adjacent to obstetric anesthesia teams promises to be a transformative, inclusive, and high-yield experience.

SOAP Fundamentals debuted in early 2023 and was such a success that we are continuing the program in fall 2024. The Fundamentals program is virtual, allowing for easy and affordable access, and designed for regions where obstetrical anesthesia care is either limited or unavailable. The content focuses on providing obstetric anesthesia knowledge to members of the entire health care team, which may include obstetricians, midwives, and labor nurses in addition to anesthesiologists, CRNAs, and other professionals.

The annual virtual Fall Forum in September 2023 was hosted in conjunction with the SOAP Mentoring Academy and focused on four key areas of professional and system development: Education, Research, Leadership, and Quality Improvement. This well-received program highlighted "Pathways to Success in Anesthesia," and we look forward to continuing this educational offering in fall 2024.

Monthly offerings for members are available in a variety of disciplines. In 2023, we debuted two new opportunities suggested by member request:

- The Conferences in Obstetrical Point of Care Ultrasound (COPUS) Case Series is intended to train attendees on image interpretation, applying POCUS findings to the clinical context of the obstetric patient.
- Our Research Journal Club is a quarterly, interactive virtual event designed



May C. M. Pian-Smith, MD, MS

President, Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology, Associate Professor of Anesthesia, Harvard Medical School, and Enterprise Director, Mass General Brigham Anesthesiology Quality and Safety, Boston, Massachusetts.



Kristen L. Fardelmann, MD

Editor, Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology Newsletter, Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology, Yale University, and Assistant Director, Anesthesiology Residency Program, Yale New Haven Hospital, New Haven, Connecticut.

to highlight a thought-worthy, clinically relevant research article. The article author presents the background and details of their research. This interactive virtual event offers unique insight and discussion on the author's journey on the research project.

We are also continuing with our traditional educational programs:

- The Fellows Webinar Series is a virtual learning opportunity, produced in partnership with OpenAnesthesia, that primarily targets fellows in obstetric anesthesiology. Lectures are available online for all, archived for long-term reference.
- The Simulation of the Month (SIMOM) is designed for multidisciplinary obstetric team training in your simulation lab or in-situ in your labor unit. Scenarios include supportive material for pre-briefing, debriefing, and feedback.
- The Point-of-Care Ultrasound E-learning Series (POCUS) presents a quarterly case-based lesson on concepts ranging from basic ultrasound principles to image acquisition techniques to discussion of specific pathologies.

Leadership development

SOAP continues to create new and exciting opportunities to support our members as they advance their careers. New opportunities include:

- SOAP Speaks! A collection of enthusiastic and engaging speakers, this database geared to launch in 2024 connects curriculum developers, institutions, and societies with SOAP members equipped with the expertise and interest in a

variety of relevant obstetric anesthesia topics.

- The SOAP Mentoring Academy debuted its Mentor/Mentee Matching Program in 2023, allowing for members to participate in a pairing based on their skills: clinical teaching, research, grant funding, leadership, quality improvement, etc. There were eight successful member pairs in the inaugural matching round.

Intersociety and patient resources

SOAP is leveraging the expertise of its members for our multispecialty colleagues and patients alike:

- As the leading voice of obstetric anesthesia, one of the key missions of SOAP is to educate our patients. A patient-facing educational website will launch in 2024. While social media has changed the way we share and receive information, it does not come without the occurrence of misinformation and misperceptions. This patient-facing website will be the ultimate guide for patients and families, providing educational information, answering frequently asked questions, suggesting discussion points for your health care professional, and more.
- Consensus statements are one of the most accessed resources that SOAP offers. In our endeavor to enhance collaboration, we have created an easily accessible, online consensus/collaboration form to allow representatives from other medical organizations to express interest in a partnership for statements, guidelines, or research.

Commitment to diversity

SOAP is committed to diversity and inclusivity throughout our organization. As a reflection of this commitment, SOAP



elevated the Diversity and Inclusivity Subcommittee to a standing committee in 2023. This committee and its robust subcommittees are purposed with: assessing the degree of diversity and inclusivity within our organization to guide ongoing initiatives; creating an environment where all members have an equal opportunity to succeed and to be heard; supporting scholarship, research, and education that address inequities in peripartum care; sharing resources for individuals and institutions to promote diversity and inclusivity; and establishing partnerships and supporting policies that address racial and ethnic disparities in pregnancy-related outcomes.

As part of leadership training, the SOAP Board of Directors, committee, and subcommittee members complete diversity, equity, and inclusivity (DEI) modules. Modules focus on diversity and inclusivity within our own organization, as well as in the obstetric anesthesia health care team and institutions.

Two Diversity and Inclusivity Mentored Grants were awarded to mentor/mentee pairs with DEI-centered research, education, or professional development projects:

- Amy Krepps, MD, MPH, and Cristina Wood, MD, for their project “Association between anemia in pregnancy and severe maternal morbidity among pregnant patients of different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups.”
- Brittany Burton, MD, and Christianna Vallera, MD, for their project “Machine learning approaches to predict postpartum hemorrhage for cesarean delivery.”

Commitment to research

In partnership with the Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research (FAER), SOAP is thrilled to offer a joint SOAP-FAER Mentored Research Training Grant to foster the development of obstetric anesthesiology and perinatology physician-investigators. This \$250,000 award, disbursed over two years, aims to support anesthesiologists interested in a career as an independent scientist. The first SOAP-FAER recipient was Dr. Andrea Ibarra, of Pittsburgh Medical Center, for her project “Longitudinal Cognitive Evaluation Before and After Delivery Among Women with Preeclampsia.”

Since 2022, the Research Network Symposium provides a forum for SOAP

members to present research proposals to SOAP’s network of experts. Constructive feedback on rigor, relevance, methodology, ethics, feasibility, and fundability of research ideas is shared and potential project collaborators are identified. The forum gathers biannually at the SOAP Annual Meeting and at the ASA annual meeting.

SOAP was originally founded with research as its primary focus. In 2023, we streamlined the process to request access to SOAP members for research projects with an online request form.

2025 Endowment Fund Campaign

The SOAP Endowment Fund Campaign is an effort to grow the endowment in order to achieve the vision of safe and equitable care for women and newborns everywhere based on the highest-caliber science. The campaign seeks to build a sustainable funding source for advancing obstetric anesthesia knowledge, defining the value of obstetric anesthesia expertise, and sharing that expertise directly with patients and multidisciplinary colleagues. Campaign funds will be invested, and the in-perpetuity proceeds used in three focus areas: 1) individual-led research, 2) society-led research, and 3) patient-facing education. This is the first Endowment Fund Campaign in SOAP’s history.

It is an honor to serve the members of SOAP and a privilege to care for our obstetric patients and their families. Visit our website (soap.org) and become a member today! We look forward to continued progress in 2024 and the growing community of SOAP members to share in our experiences. ■

Disclosure: Dr. Pian-Smith sits on the Board of Directors for the Anesthesia Patient Safety Foundation and the Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research.