**Title**

A critical analysis of the volume, scope, and safety of anaesthesia delivered by GP anaesthetists

**Author and affiliations**

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**Background**

GP Anaesthetists (GPAs) perform pivotal work within rural communities across Australia. In many communities there would be no elective surgical services, significantly reduced maternity services, and arguably no pre-tertiary hospital critical care without GPAs.

Australian GP Anaesthetists are a disparate group of practitioners. Affiliations to several colleges, variable credentialing practices, inequitable hospital resourcing and the tyranny of distance are significant challenges which has invariably led to differences in the scope of GPA practice around the country.

Scant data exists about the work undertaken by GPAs. No single credentialing body is responsible for data collection and inconsistent, incomplete data exists within health authorities.

Currently, the long term future of the vital service that GPAs deliver to rural Australians is at risk.

**Aims**

1: Capture – identify GPAs across the country and develop a sense of community.

2: Define – collect data which illustrates the scope and quality of GPA service delivery.

3: Refine – determine how best to resource, credential and train GPAs.

**Methods**

* Creation of on line communities
* Advocacy for GPAs within the RACGP and ANZCA.
* Support of GPA forums around the country
* A smartphone App is in development to collect data.

**Results**

In just 4 months Rural Anaesthesia Down Under, a closed Facebook page created by Tim Leewenburg and myself, has registered over 270 GPAs and provided a forum for sharing experiences, resources, and peer support. The inaugural newsletter is planned for April 2018.

Inaugural RACGP GPA networking forum is planned for April 2018.

The curriculum for Diploma of Anaesthesia is currently being reviewed.

**Conclusion**

An immediate need exists to create cohesion between GPAs in Australia. Characterising the nature and quality of GPA services will inform initiatives designed to ensure this vital service continues to exist for rural Australia.

**References** (If applicable)