



# The Difficult Airway Society

eNewsletter 7th April 2011



The Royal College of Anaesthetists



The Difficult Airway Society



The National Patient Safety Agency  
Patient Safety Division



The Intensive Care Society



The College of Emergency Medicine

4th National Audit Project of  
The Royal College of Anaesthetists and The Difficult Airway Society

## Major complications of airway management in the UK

**READ the NAP 4 REPORT**

<http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/index.asp?PageID=1089>

**READ the NAP 4 BJA Articles (BJA Access required)**

T. M. Cook, N. Woodall, C. Frerk, and on behalf of the Fourth National Audit Project  
Major complications of airway management in the UK: results of the Fourth National Audit Project of the Royal College of Anaesthetists and the Difficult Airway Society. Part 1: Anaesthesia  
*Br. J. Anaesth.* (2011) *aer058* first published online March 29, 2011 doi:10.1093/bja/aer058

T. M. Cook, N. Woodall, J. Harper, J. Bengner, and on behalf of the Fourth National Audit Project  
Major complications of airway management in the UK: results of the Fourth National Audit Project of the Royal College of Anaesthetists and the Difficult Airway Society. Part 2: intensive care and emergency departments  
*Br. J. Anaesth.* (2011) *aer059* first published online March 29, 2011 doi:10.1093/bja/aer059

**READ the Editorial on NAP 4 in *Anaesthesia* (access required)**

E. O'Sullivan, J. Laffey and J. J. Pandit  
A rude awakening after our fourth 'NAP': lessons for airway management  
*Anaesthesia* (2011) Article first published online: 30 MAR 2011 | DOI: 10.1111/j.1365-2044.2011.06755.x

Welcome to the electronic version of the Difficult Airway Society Newsletter or eDAS for short. This doesn't replace the paper version (the next one should be with you in June), but it gives us the chance to keep you up to date with happenings in the Difficult Airway Society with news email shots. And there hasn't been a bigger recent event in airway management than the publication of the National Audit Project Four (NAP 4) report. The report was launched at the Royal College of Anaesthetists in conjunction with DAS on Wednesday 30th

March to a packed house. Because of the demand, the day will be repeated in July— see the advert below.

Clearly we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Tim Cook, Nick Woodall and Chris Frerk who have steered this project through to its conclusion. The number of hours invested by the review group looking at individual cases doesn't bare thinking about – to them also we are indebted as well as the army of local reporters who collected census data and chased up the cases to include in the report. Final thanks must go however, to the brave

clinicians who were willing to report the details of the cases that make up the report.

The findings are not all new to us but there is now data to support general consensus about airway management. Now surely is a good time to revise airway strategy at a local and national level and also develop a research plan to address the issues raised by the audit. Please take the time to read the report and talk about it in your departments. It represents a fantastic piece of scholarship from which we suspect we will be learning lessons for many years to come.

Alistair McNarry, Ravi Bhagath

## **Key Facts**

- ◆ **2.9 million general anaesthetics/year**
- ◆ **Aspiration was the commonest cause of death**
- ◆ **Poor airway assessment**
- ◆ **Poor airway management strategy, failure to plan**
- ◆ **Awake FOI was indicated but not performed**
- ◆ **High failure rate of emergency cricothyrotomy**
- ◆ **Failure to interpret capnograph trace leading to unrecognized oesophageal intubation**
- ◆ **A third of events occurred at extubation or in recovery**
- ◆ **Events occurred in males more than females**
- ◆ **Obesity was ignored as a risk factor for airway difficulty**
- ◆ **Difficult intubations were managed by multiple repeat attempts**
- ◆ **Supraglottic devices were sometimes used inappropriately**

## **Supporting Clinicians Involved**

With the changes to the college website since the report's publication, the original "Support Pack" sent to all case submitters can now be accessed here [http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/docs/NAP4pack\\_support.pdf](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/docs/NAP4pack_support.pdf)

**"Life is ten per cent what happens to you and ninety per cent how you respond to it"**

**Lou Holtz, American Football Coach**

## **So what's DAS doing?**

Over the next few weeks there will be

- ◇ Downloadable Summary of the Recommendations (Appendix 5)
- ◇ Summary PowerPoint presentation to help members discuss it in your own departments
- ◇ Revise/develop Airway Management Guidelines
- ◇ -Develop a research strategy to address issues raised by this audit

**But** The Difficult Airway Society is much more than its committee, the NAP 4 Review Panel or even Tim and Nick. We would love to know how individual DAS Members and their departments are responding to the recommendations contained in the report— so please tell us how this seminal work has influenced or changed your practice.

***"It is my sincere hope the NAP 4 and follow-on work will enable a broader clinical community to make disaster much less common and heroic saves much less needed."***

***Martin Bromiley***

**after  
National Audit Project  
Four  
I/we/my department did...**



**Tell us what you or your  
department will do differently  
email [newsletter@das.uk.com](mailto:newsletter@das.uk.com)**



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## **THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ANAESTHETISTS AND THE DIFFICULT AIRWAY SOCIETY**

The NAP4 Report was launched in March incorporating a study day on Major Complications of Airway Management in the UK

Due to popular demand, a second study day will now be held in July

# NAP4 REPORT DAY WEDNESDAY, 13 JULY 2011

at The Royal College of Anaesthetists

Churchill House ■ 35 Red Lion Square ■ London WC1R 4SG

## **Led by Dr Tim Cook, Dr Nick Woodall and the NAP4 Review panel**

**A full day of presentations covering all major aspects  
of airway complications including:**

- Major airway complications:
  - During anaesthesia
  - In the intensive therapy unit
  - In the emergency department
- Complications of supra-glottic airway devices (SADs)
- Complications of tracheal tubes
- Problems at extubation
- Problems in recovery
- The obstructed airway
- The emergency surgical airway
- Aspiration
- Obesity
- And others

**Approved for 5 CPD points**

**Fee: £105 (code: D95)**

**To register, please go to [www.rcoa.ac.uk/events](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/events)**

