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 Bhagrath

**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

“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

**Tell us what you or your department will do differently**

email newsletter@das.uk.com

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National Audit Project Four

I/we/my department did…

after
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