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Future generation of anesthesiologists: What professional qualifications should we aim for?

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Opinion

Future generation of anesthesiologists: What professional qualifications should we aim for?

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Abstract

In recent years, time-based training has been replaced by competency-based training in many medical specialities in Europe. Anesthesiology has been at the forefront of these developments. The main advantage of a competency-based training lies in the shift from knowledge acquisition to knowledge application. Competence-based training doesn't replace knowledge-based training, but complements the latter, especially in the more advanced setting.

The role of the anesthesiologist has extended from the operating room as the main area of competence to new responsibilities outside the operating room. The previously described four most important roles for anesthesiologists, published by the EBA (European Board of Anaesthesiology) in 2008, are still useful to summarize the broader range of responsibilities: medical expert, leader/manager, scholar and professional. The role as leader in the perioperative field and manager of the operating room is gaining in importance, especially in today's environment of cost containment. Management is the field where our specialty can have the biggest impact on patient processes and efficiency of the perioperative setting.

In addition to the above mentioned four main roles, anaesthesiologist should be highly self-motivated and have the ability to withstand long working hours and night shifts. A considerable number of consensual factors (time constraints, excessive and fluctuating workload, complexity of task, lack of job control) can cause stress, resulting in a high burn-out rate among anesthesiologist. Personal factors such as a high level of emotional intelligence and realistic self-awareness are important prerequisites for this profession and have to be fostered throughout the professional development and career.

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