



Anesthesia  
**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

**Collaborating for Exceptional Care, Discovery and Education**  
**Department of Anesthesia Strategic Plan 2019–2024**  
*April 22, 2019*

**Message from the Chair**

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The Department of Anesthesia at the University of Toronto takes great pride in its strong clinical and academic foundations. Our faculty members are recognized as world leaders in many clinical programs and are renowned for discoveries in both preclinical and clinical sciences. We support exceptional educators who are developing best-in-class programs. We host three highly sought-after residency training programs (anesthesia, pain medicine and family practice anesthesia), and an internationally renowned fellowship training program. This is an exciting time as our department builds on these strong foundations.

The goal of this 5-year Strategic Plan is to help us reach our full potential as the world leader in anesthesiology and pain medicine. The plan is based on the responses to two key questions: What are our winning aspirations for success? How do we achieve these aspirations? Over a five-month period – from October 2018 to February 2019 – more than 75 members of our faculty came together to construct a strategy. It was abundantly clear from these discussions that our vision is to provide outstanding clinical care for every patient across the city and the province and to constantly improve care through relentless innovation. Also, we will reimagine and advance medical education to better support all learners, including patients, students, residents, fellows and faculty.

To achieve this vision, we must capitalize on our unique strengths and increase our leadership roles at hospital sites, throughout the university and across the province. We must be recognized for the work that is already under way and leverage our capabilities to increase efficiencies across hospital sites. We need to maximize resources to support our aspirations through fundraising and the further development of physician-led anesthesia care teams.

As clinical services expand, our department is poised for substantial growth. We must therefore implement best practices to ensure that we recruit high-potential faculty who will become the next generation of leaders. We must also support the well-being of trainees and faculty by promoting a sense of control or “voice” and a positive work environment that supports diversity and inclusion. Most importantly, we must rigorously measure and analyze our progress and redirect efforts when necessary.

Changes have already started to better reflect the work we are doing. We have embarked on the process of renaming the department to the *Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine*, to showcase our leadership in the sciences related to these fields. We are establishing working groups to address the growing need for anesthesia care for non-operating room procedures, such as minimally invasive surgery and code stroke. As well, we are developing administrative tools to help streamline recruitment of faculty at hospital sites.

Let’s work together to become the world leader in anesthesiology and pain medicine by addressing the five action priorities outlined in the pages that follow.

**Beverley A. Orser, MD, PhD, FRCPC, FRSC, FCAHS**  
Professor and Chair, Department of Anesthesia

## Five-Year Strategic Plan

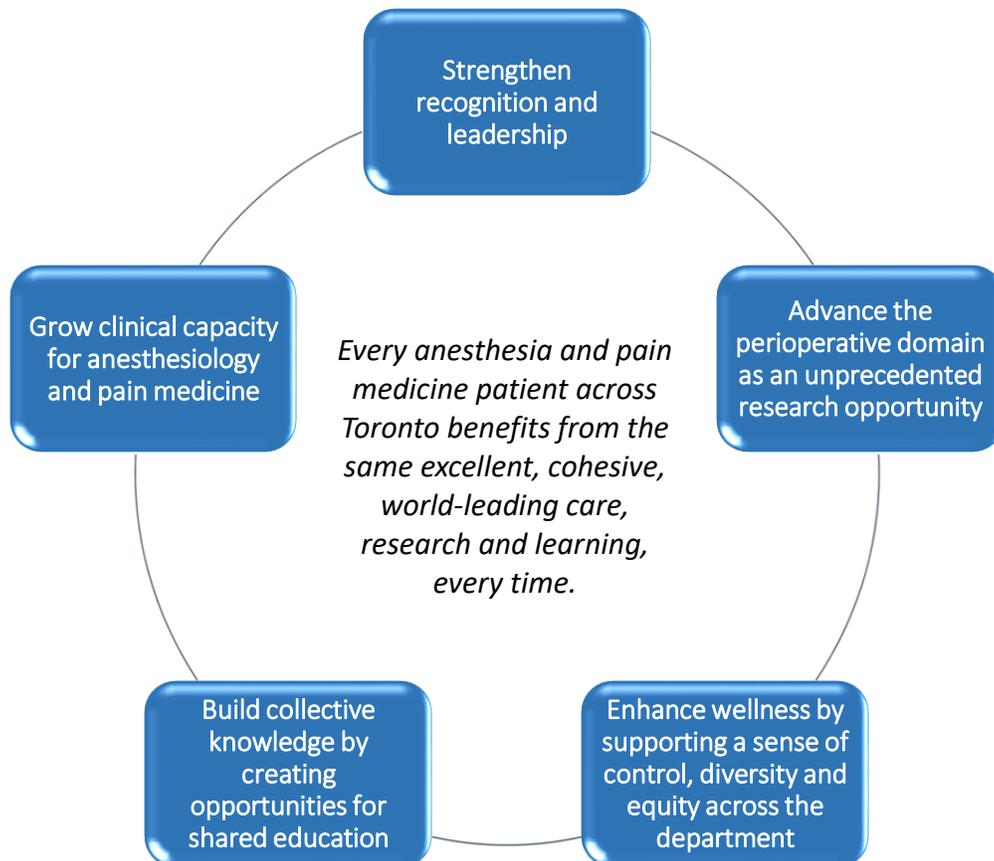
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To guide our work, the department has set out the following aspirations:

*We will work together to ensure that, by 2024, every patient across the city and the province receives the same standard of excellent clinical care and that clinical outcomes continue to improve through research and relentless innovation. We will develop, implement and study novel educational strategies to support all learners. Together, we will develop a better sense of control and voice and create positive work environments that allow us to feel well and enjoy pride in our work.*

The following five action priorities will help us to achieve these aspirations:

1. **Strengthen recognition and leadership**
2. **Grow clinical capacity for anesthesiology and pain medicine**
3. **Advance the perioperative domain as an unprecedented research opportunity**
4. **Build collective knowledge by creating opportunities for shared education**
5. **Enhance wellness by supporting a sense of control, diversity and equity across the department**



## Strengthen recognition and leadership

**Goals:** Raise visibility and awareness of the full impact of faculty contributions to clinical services, education and research. Strengthen leadership roles in decision-making processes at the hospital, university and at the provincial level to better meet the needs of patients and our academic mission.

Actions in Year 1:

- Formally change the name of the department to the Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine, to recognize the full scope of our role in healthcare and to highlight the leadership and impact we have achieved.
- Use this name change as an opportunity to rebrand the department as a leading force in anesthesiology and pain medicine.
- Enhance communication strategies to showcase clinical and academic success through newsletters, public media and digital platforms.
- Build mentorship programs to support faculty as they improve teaching, perform research, and develop and clinical innovations.
- Recognize important contributions to research, education and clinical service by celebrating faculty and trainee awards and promotions during the annual Shields Day.
- Measure the impact of changes and interventions through annual reports, citations, social media reports and conventional and novel metrics.

Actions in Years 2-5:

- Capture education-related contributions in the annual report.
- Create a faculty dashboard that capture education, innovation, research contributions.
- Provide opportunities for faculty to advance their leadership skills.
- Increase national and international recognition awards for faculty.
- Identify faculty leaders who will support the implementation of Competency-By-Design and other leadership opportunities across all educational programs.
- Facilitate the onboarding of new leaders including hospital site chiefs with e-orientation tools.

## Grow clinical capacity for anesthesiology and pain medicine

**Goals:** Strengthen faculty recruitment to meet the increasing need for clinical services while maintaining the department's commitment to education and research. Partner with family physicians and allied health professionals including anesthesia assistants to expand family practice anesthesia, pain program, anesthesia in care team (ACT) and pain care teams (PCT).

Actions in Year 1:

- Incorporate best practices into the recruiting processes for new faculty at hospital sites.
- Establish a working group that partners with hospital and provincial planners to plan and execute out-of-operating room anesthesia care services.
- Establish a Quality Improvement Committee under the leadership of the Director of Quality Improvement and Patient Safety.

#### Actions in Years 2-5:

- To expand services, develop new care models by partnering with allied health professionals, including anesthesia assistants. Apply this team-based approach to sustain high-quality medicine while providing resources to support complex care, research and teaching.
- Partner with the Department of Family and Community Medicine to host a symposium on anesthesia and pain medicine in rural and remote regions of Canada.
- Explore opportunities with organizations such as Ornge and the Canadian Armed Forces to develop shared e-education programs and workshops that will have a national and international impact.
- Collaborate with the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society, Association of Canadian University Departments of Anesthesia and other organizations to promote access to safe anesthesia and pain medicine for all Canadians.
- Take a leadership role at the local, provincial and national levels to provide ongoing support for the Family Practice Anesthesia program through coaching, mentorship and networking.

### **Advance the perioperative domain as an unprecedented research opportunity**

**Goals:** Increase research funding by garnering new resources. Create new knowledge about pathophysiology and ways to improve patient outcomes by strengthening research training, forming focused research clusters, promoting multicentre studies and sharing data.

#### Actions in Year 1:

- Partner with the Faculty of Medicine Office of Advancement to develop new funding sources.
- Ensure optimum stewardship of donations through the departmental Awards Committee.
- Create infrastructure to develop new professorships and research chair programs.
- Recruit a Vice-Chair of Research and establish a Research and Innovation Committee.
- Establish city-wide themed research rounds.
- Use cross-appointments of faculty in other departments to strengthen faculty research programs.
- Enhance research training through workshops, partnerships and the Clinician Investigator Program.
- Support the national Canadian Perioperative Anesthesia Clinical Trials Group.
- Develop and recruit faculty to support education-related research.

#### Actions in Years 2-5:

- Use funds from the merit award program to promote collaborative research across hospital sites.
- Build research clusters that focus on questions requiring multicentre approaches.
- Promote streamlining of research service agreements, research ethics board approvals, intellectual property agreements and commercialization agreements across the city.
- Identify creative research data-sharing opportunities.

## Build collective knowledge by creating opportunities for shared education

**Goals:** Create opportunities to share our knowledge across hospital sites, for both trainees and faculty, using technology and targeted opportunities. Assess the impact of our educational activities.

Actions in Year 1:

- Develop an inventory of existing knowledge-sharing opportunities (e.g. named lectures and special rounds), and appoint a department leader to widely promote such opportunities.
- Use current educational opportunities (such as named lectures and special rounds) to develop knowledge that supports our strategic priorities.
- Use Faculty Development Days to engender specific skills that align with our strategic priorities.
- Share knowledge about best financial practices by creating a financial leaders working group.

Actions in Years 2-5:

- Develop a plan to expand the impact of existing shared learning opportunities across the city and the province, through technology (e.g., webcasting, two-minute video clips for rounds, e-modules,) archiving (e.g., repositories of lectures, Professor's Rounds) and other means.
- Create an assessment tools for the fellows' training program.
- Establish stable financial support for the fellows' training program.
- Expand the use of technology including simulations and virtual reality to enhance learning
- Develop a faculty evaluation strategy that offers timely feedback to mentors and program leaders.
- Develop a longer-term strategy to position our department as a key resource for upskilling and standard-setting, including the creation of an e-digital hub for knowledge-sharing among medical students, residents, fellows and faculty.
- Develop a system to link the academic plans of newly recruited clinician-teachers and clinician-educators to the strategic priorities of educational leaders.
- Engage patients in pertinent aspects of education.

## Enhance wellness by supporting a sense of control, diversity and equity across the department

**Goals:** Promote wellness and inclusion for faculty across Toronto through best practices. Seek international recognition for faculty as a change force for equity and diversity.

Actions in Year 1:

- Make a commitment to a culture of giving and receiving constructive feedback.
- Appoint a Wellness Officer and establish a Wellness and Diversity Team.
- Embrace broader Faculty of Medicine wellness initiatives to ensure that department members have access to the resources they need to sustain their energy and health.
- Recognize and address bullying and harassment in high-acuity clinical environments, such as the operating room and trauma bay.
- Develop a departmental policy for bullying and harassment.

- Support resident-led initiatives that promote wellness, such as the annual Sports Days and other social events.
- Curate wellness rounds.
- Create a sense support within each of our personal and professional spheres.

Actions in Years 2-5:

- Undertake a survey, in follow-up to the survey entitled, *Voice of the Faculty*, to identify barriers to wellness and sources of bullying and harassment.
  - Develop guidelines for parental leave.
  - Develop guidelines for career transition for senior faculty.
  - Identify a team to address non-operating room care in initial hospitals.
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