

Anaemia Nurse Specialist Association: past, present, future

Since it was established in 2000, the Anaemia Nurse Specialist Association (ANSA) has helped to advance the provision of anaemia services in the UK. In this article, Sharon Benton, past president of ANSA (2012–2014), gives an update on the association and its activities as an affiliate of the British Renal Society

■ anaemia ■ kidney disease ■ ANSA ■ BRS

The Anaemia Nurse Specialist Association (ANSA) has been at the forefront of improving anaemia service provision for almost two decades.

Past

ANSA was founded in 2000 by Lesley Bennett, Karen Jenkins, Marie Chowrimootoo and Bernice Thompson. All four founding members were renal anaemia nurses at the time, and created the association as a national and international network for renal anaemia nurses in order to advance the provision of anaemia services. It was recognised early on that clinical practice varied from centre to centre and, as such, ANSA wanted to provide a focal point to encourage, foster and facilitate excellence in exchanges of information and opinion. The overarching purpose has and will always be to improve patient outcomes through optimal care and management. The first ANSA conference was held in 2002, and has been an annual event ever since.

ANSA has been an affiliate of the British Renal Society (BRS) for many years, and has a seat on the BRS council.

ANSA and the BRS hold a shared core aim of promoting effective patient-centred care to improve quality of life for people living with chronic kidney disease, their families and carers. ANSA's affiliation with BRS has enabled the association to be part of and support innovations and advances in renal medicine. Indeed, ANSA was involved in the writing and introduction of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidelines on anaemia management in people with chronic kidney disease (NICE, 2015). These guidelines were first published over a decade ago, but were last updated in 2015, and are currently being combined within the review of NICE guidance for chronic kidney disease (NICE, 2014) and have helped to define renal anaemia management, both nationally and internationally.

Present

Up until 2018, ANSA was a paid membership association, but since registering as a charity it is now free to become a member. ANSA solely relies on donations from sponsors and income from the annual conference for financial support. All committee members volunteer their time to run the association

New ANSA website

2018 was a busy year for ANSA. The website has been updated and the website sub-group has been hard at work designing a far superior, better organised and more graphically pleasing facility. The website is an excellent resource for educational

materials, guidelines and protocols, news and product information. Visit the website at www.anaemianurse.org

E-learning modules

Some time ago, ANSA developed and introduced two e-learning modules focusing on anaemia in chronic kidney disease and anaemia of chronic disease. These were co-created with the *Nursing Times* and are available via their website. The modules have recently been updated and combined into a single module: Anaemia: Recognition and Management, available via <https://www.nursingtimes.net/learning-units-and-portfolio>. The module is free to *Nursing Times* registered subscribers.

Annual conference

The 2018 annual conference was a huge success. Feedback told us that delegates found the conference to be informative, friendly and well organised. Topics covered included patient safety, pre-operative intravenous iron in major surgery, the effects of inflammation and infection in chronic kidney disease and how it impacts anaemia management, and a review of the latest blood transfusion guidelines.

Future

E-learning modules

ANSA is in the process of revising the existing Iron Deficiency modules, working in partnership with OCB media to combine them into a single module, rather than seven individual ones. Topics for review include:

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- Iron in the body
 - Iron deficiency anaemia
 - Iron overload
 - Treatments of iron deficiency and iron overload
 - Iron deficiency in gastroenterology
 - Iron deficiency in chronic kidney disease
 - Iron deficiency in chronic heart failure.
- A single 'Managing Iron Deficiency' module will be available in 2019.

Annual conference 2019

The 2019 annual conference will be held on 12th April at The Burlington Hotel, Birmingham.

The programme will include presentations on advanced practice, findings and recommendations for practice from the

PIVOTAL trial (Macdougall et al, 2018) and further work on peri-operative assessment and practical workshops exploring iron deficiency anaemia and related treatment in heart failure and gastrointestinal medicine.

Online registration will open soon on the ANSA website, at <https://anaemianurse.org/conferences/>.

ANSA at UKKW 2019

ANSA will also be making an appearance at UK Kidney week in June, where we will be chairing a parallel session 'Future Influences on Anaemia Management in Chronic Kidney Disease' with eminent guest speaker Myles Woolf, Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of Nephrology at Duke University, North

Carolina, US.

ANSA is a great resource for healthcare professionals for information on management of anaemia across all disease areas. Become part of the ANSA community by joining us at www.anemianurse.org. **JKC**

References

- Macdougall IC, White C, Anker SD et al. Intravenous iron in patients undergoing maintenance hemodialysis. *N Engl J Med*. 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1056/nejmoa1810742>
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Chronic kidney disease: managing anaemia. NICE guideline [NG8]. 2015. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng8> (accessed 11 January 2019)
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