



ISSUE 38 | SUMMER 2025

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|--|
| 01 | Welcome to the summer issue | 07 | Update from the RCoA Educational Fellows for the FRCA examination | 11 | In defence of 'failure' |
| 02 | De-mystifying the College: Who actually recruits to anaesthesia? | 08 | Updates from the ICACCST trainee representatives | 12 | A 'PEEP' into anaesthesia |
| 03 | Subspecialty updates | 09 | Global Anaesthesia, Surgery and Obstetric Collaboration (GASOC) | 13 | Peer to peer – anaesthetist in training-led, focused viva practice |
| 06 | From POPPY to SECURE | 10 | Wellbeing in the Thames Valley | 14 | Bedtime reading |

Caring and Supportive



Just and Fair



Innovative and Progressive



Open and Responsive





Pain medicine

Dr Alex Hollis, ST6 Wessex Deanery, Faculty of Pain Medicine Trainee representative

Recent developments in pain medicine reflect significant governance changes in the prescribing practices for postsurgical pain. Most notably, the licence for prolonged-release opioids for postoperative pain relief has been removed. This change follows concerns about the increased risk of persistent postoperative opioid use (PPOU) and opioid-induced ventilatory impairment (OIVI). The impact of this removal on future postoperative prescribing and current protocols remains uncertain, but it certainly serves as an important prompt to review and reassess existing practices.

A deeper understanding of the psychology behind chronic postsurgical pain is also emerging, with new insights into identifying risk factors, prevention and management strategies ([SAGE Journals](#)).

In addition, research on the neural circuit basis of placebo pain relief continues to expand our understanding of non-pharmacological interventions in pain management ([Nature](#)).

For those seeking educational resources, the Faculty of Pain Medicine (FPM) offers FPM Learning, an open resource with a variety of teaching materials, and e-PAIN provides a multidisciplinary curriculum for healthcare professionals involved in pain management. Both platforms aim to enhance the knowledge and skills of those in the field ([FPM](#), [FPM e-PAIN](#)).

Research opportunities, such as Pain Train, a national network for pain trainees interested in research and audit, provide valuable collaboration platforms ([Pain Train UK](#)).

Key events:

- FPM Annual Trainee Day: 14 November 2025 (details on FPM website)
- 2025 ISPN [Annual Conference](#): 9–11 October 2025, Gloucester



Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia

Dr Jonathan Barnes, ST7 Severn Deanery, ACTACC trainee representative

Dr Sabrina Butcher, Senior Clinical Fellow, Northern Deanery, ACTACC trainee representative

ACTACC (the Association of Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia and Critical Care) hosted their annual scientific meeting in Leicester this year, with a programme of excellent speakers and workshops. [ACTACC](#) is also launching a new website, which will serve as a fantastic resource with links to courses, educational resources and fellowship opportunities.

ACTACC has also started hosting a monthly webinar, which has so far received excellent attendance and covered topics including anaesthesia for major aortic surgery, enhanced recovery, echocardiography and more! Alongside these, the ACTTI (Association of Cardiothoracic Transplant Intensivists) are running an excellent series of webinars covering all things transplant, which are well worth checking out for any interested trainees. CAP (Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia Partnership) continues to run their highly informative lecture series, covering all things cardiac, thoracic and intensive care, with previous meetings available to review on their website – all for free!

For any trainees considering a career in cardiothoracics, there are also an increasing number of transoesophageal echocardiography and mechanical support courses running across the country, plus of course the highly successful One Heart and One Lung courses, which serve as a great introduction to the practical aspects of the speciality.