



VITAL ANAESTHESIA SIMULATION TRAINING



VAST Mongolia Pilot VW, 3-day FC, 1-day VC

*Mongolia – Japan Teaching Hospital
Mongolia University of Medical Sciences (MNUMS)
Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
May 21- 25, 2024*

Executive summary

Situation

Vital Anaesthesia Simulation Training (VAST) Wellbeing, Facilitator Course (3-day) and VAST Course (1-day) were piloted in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia at the Japan Mongolia Teaching Hospital, Mongolia University of Medical Sciences (MNUMS), by Drs. Burma Sanjaa, Batgombo and Ganbold Lundeg

Background

The VAST Course was developed to teach and reinforce essential clinical practices and non-technical skills for both anaesthesia providers and perioperative teams. VAST was first piloted in 2018. Since then, VAST's courses have been offered 89 to participants from over 30 countries.

Adam Mossenson, Founder, presented the topic of VAST at the Mongolian Society of Anaesthesia Annual Scientific Conference in 2023 and since then, worked with Batgombo Natsagdorj, Ganbold Lundeg, and others, to develop the application for ANZCA Health Equity Project Fund Grant and financial support from ASA to begin a longitudinal plan for implementation. Dr. Burmaa Sanjaa was identified as the lead for translation of VAST into Mongolian.

Assessment

All courses were received with great enthusiasm and a desire for more training and practice. FC and VW were delivered in English, while VC was delivered in both English with Mongolian translation, in real time, by the participants. A total of 8 facilitators and 1 observer were trained in the Facilitator Course (FC), 19 participated in VAST Wellbeing (VW), and 6 participated in the 1-Day VAST Course (VC). This cohort of new facilitators, will aid in the delivery of future courses in Mongolia, both at the Mongolian-Japan Teaching Hospital (MNUMS), and district hospitals in the countryside.

Recommendations

This pilot course proved to be highly beneficial for training the first cohort of VAST facilitators in Mongolia. It provided them with a new, and valuable, practical experience in simulation-based learning while establishing a foundation for the acquisition of anesthesia non-technical skills (ANTS).

Less than one week after the initial course, the new facilitator group is demonstrating their newly acquired learning and skills to their colleagues in their respective hospital. Participants were encouraged to apply their enhanced debriefing skills with their trainees and within their respective workplaces. Furthermore, VW was recognized as a crucial resource that participants could bring to their workplaces, raising awareness and promoting its significance.

Language continues to be a challenge in participants acquisition of VAST concepts; therefore, it is critical that future courses in Mongolia be delivered in Mongolian. There is a translation team identified and the plan is to work towards delivery of courses in 2025 using fully translated materials.

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Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge:

- ANZCA and ASA for their financial support of this initiative
- The enthusiasm and support of our international faculty that delivered three very challenging courses.

Attendees

Ulaanbaatar MGN VAST VW May 20, 2024				
Last Name	First Name	Specialty	Hospital/Affiliation	Course Role
Natsagdorj	Batgombo	Anesthesia	Intermed Hospital	Participant
Sanjaa	Burmaa	Anesthesia	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Adiya	Dolgorsuren	Anesthesia	National Center of Maternal and Child Health	Participant
Bayanhuu	Dulguun	Anesthesia	Mongolia-Japan Hospital	Participant
Sundui	Enkhtaivan	Anesthesia	National Center of Maternal and Child Health	Participant
Chuluun	Erdenetsetseg	Surgeon	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Jargal	Munkh-Od	Anesthesia	Mongolia-Japan Hospital	Participant
Tumurbaatar	Munkhbat	Anesthesia	General Hospital for State Special Servants	Participant
Jargalsaikhan	Nomindari	Anesthesia	Third Central Hospital	Participant
Urjin	Sanchin	Surgeon	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Orsoo	Soyombo	Anesthesia	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Daramsuren	Tserendulam	Anesthesia	Central Military Hospital	Participant
Dashdoroo	Unurbold	Anesthesia	National Center of Maternal and Child Health	Participant
Lkhagvajav	Unurzaya	Anesthesia		Participant
Gankhuyag	Uriintuya	Anesthesia	Central Military Hospital	Participant

Ulaanbaatar VAST Facilitator Course May 21-23, 2024				
Last Name	First Name	Specialty	Hospital	Course Role
Chuluuntsend	Enkhzaya	Anesthesia	Intermed Hospital	Participant
Lundeg	Ganbold	Anesthesia	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Orsoo	Soyombo	Anesthesia	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Maisaikhan	Undram	Anesthesia	National Center of Maternal and Child Health	Participant
Natsagdorj	Batgombo	Anesthesia	Intermed Hospital	Participant
Sanjaa	Burmaa	Anesthesia	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant
Jargal	Munkh-Od	Anesthesia	Mongolia-Japan Hospital	Participant
Jargalsaikhan	Nomindari	Anesthesia	Third Central Hospital	Participant

Ulaanbaatar 1-day VAST Course May 24, 2024				
Last Name	First Name	Specialty	Hospital	Course Role
Dulguun	Bayanhuu	Anesthesia	Mongolia -Japan hospital	Participant
Unurbold	Dashdoroo	Anesthesia	National Center of Maternal and Child Health	Participant
Chimedtsyе	Enkhbayar	Anesthesia	Second Central hospital	Participant
Odonchimeg	Gombosuren	Anesthesia	First Central hospital	Participant
Enkhtaivan	Sundui	Anesthesia	National Center of Maternal and Child Health	Participant
Tsolmon	Byamba-Erdene	Anesthesia	National University of Medical Sciences	Participant

Venue and Equipment

Venue

The courses were held in the Skills and Simulation Centre of the Mongolia-Japan Hospital in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The courses utilized the one simulation and one lecture room and used the lecture room for debriefing.

Equipment

Equipment was provided by the Mongolia Japan Hospital skills and simulation Centre. iPads were provided by VAST for use during these courses.

VAST Wellbeing

This was the first wellbeing course run in Mongolia. Although initially participants were somewhat quiet, as the course progressed, participants displayed a willingness to openly share and engage in discussions. It is useful to have more group discussions on specific causes of burn out in the local context and brainstorming local solutions. Historically, mental health and overall well-being have remained subjects avoided in open conversations. Hence, the platform created for discussing these matters openly was met with significant gratitude. Attendees generated excellent ideas for enhancing their individual and workplace well-being, i.e., appreciation post-it notes (BN). The tools provided throughout the course were regarded as pragmatic and feasible, resulting in a highly positive reception.

VAST Facilitator Course

Preparation

This was the first VAST was run in Mongolia. Although equipment was in-house, the sim coordinator spent the first day, during VW, setting up the room. Ipads were provided by VAST for use during the course. In addition, SLACK channel was created to facilitate communication between the facilitators and enable effective planning regarding course participant lists for the learning platform, travel/logistics. Uptake using slack was limited to the planning group. We are not sure if on-line content was understandable for participants as it is in English.

The FC utilized only a single simulation room as this was a pilot course (n=7) in Mongolia. As in Tanzania (2023) the decision was made to run the same scenarios for each group (A/B) as there were not sufficient numbers for all role assignments plus scenario facilitation. This worked extremely well for this particular group which struggled with concepts in English as each group felt a bit less confused being able to observe the other group run the same scenario. This demonstrates that there is flexibility in course delivery, in context, without compromising the learning outcomes for each participant. We would recommend this practice when courses are delivered in English and the learners have another first language.

Facilitation and debriefing practice

The bulk of the course involved practice of the four elements of VAST scenario facilitation: briefing, iPads/prompts, debriefing, and co-facilitation. In addition, the FC was delivered over three days enabling everyone to have the opportunity for practicing each role at least twice. FC participants were paired with experienced facilitators for leading, running the iPads and making observations for the debriefing. In addition, the decision was made to provide more practice leading debriefing as our participants struggled with this the most. Therefore, Debriefing Conversation Starters was substituted in place of Implementation Planning on Day 3. Again, this demonstrates flexibility without compromising learning outcomes. We found

that the 3-day FC course was very beneficial as it provided ample time for all components of the course.

Scenario design

Participants also worked in two groups to design new scenarios using the VAST scenario template. While the intention of this exercise is to give participants a deeper understanding of the mechanics of scenario design, we felt their time was better utilized practicing debriefing skills and after the initial work on day 1, we gave the group extra time regarding debriefing.

Simulation Coordinator Training

Sara Whynot worked with Burma Sanjaa and ensured she had a good understanding on how the room was set up and how to prepare for each new scenario. Dr Sanjaa identified a very competent person to perform this role in upcoming courses and she participated in the 10day VAST course so has a good understanding of how the simulation space is used.

Social Life

The group of participants, including the international and local faculty were collegial, lively, and engaged. Dr. Batgombo ensured there were residents assigned to help the international faculty find their way around Ulaanbaatar and answered any questions we had about local night life. A highlight for our group was a visit to The Fat Cat, the local, and surprisingly popular, jazz bar in Ulanbaatar. A great end to our time was dinner with the facilitator trainee group on the last evening. Our Mongolian colleagues, and now friends, are charming group of collegial professionals.

Australian Ambassador Visit

We were fortunate to have Dr. David Pescod as part of the international faculty. He is a well-respected anesthesiologist in Australia and a champion and ally in the advancement of the anesthesia practice in Mongolia for over 20 years.

As such, he was arranged an informal visit from the Australian Ambassador assigned to Mongolia, Ms. Katie Smith. Her visit facilitated, with her support, an application for funding from Mongolia Direct Aid Program 2024-25. With David's help, we were able to submit an application for funding and are hopeful it is successful.

Course Evaluations and Informal feedback

VAST WELLBEING COURSE FEEDBACK

Participants found that the course material was relevant to them and would use some of the skills explored in the course. General comments were very positive and included new concepts that resonated with the participant such as building a healthy workplace, mindfulness exercises, expressing gratitude, and SMART goals.

Main takeaways overwhelmingly noted recognizing and managing burnout in themselves and being aware of recognizing signs in their colleagues. Most noted the desire to change workplace habits to improve organizational health. Health habits and gratitude for themselves and others were also noted.

What went well

- Thank you for the course. I needed it for my well being.
- Supportive and teamwork spirit are Vital not only in VAST but in day to day life process

Challenges / Improvements

- Giving more room to share individual responses and therefor learning more
- More time for the course to allow reflection and sharing experiences.
- Psychological, economical, and socially

Take home messages (from participants)

- Our wellbeing is crucial for our health and those around us.
- inexpensive and practical things can be done in our settings to prevent burn out.
- each one of us has a role to play.
- Burn out is multidimensional.
- it is not expensive to prevent burnout.
- verbal encouragement can be highly effective in maintaining wellbeing.
- Wellbeing is determined by both physical and mental health.
- Sharing ideas with people and exchanging ideas also promotes wellbeing.
- Wellbeing has multifactorial root causes, so when dealing with wellbeing an individual should be considered as a "whole", holistic approach to care should be considered.

Recommendations

- Running wellbeing courses regularly in our workplaces will improve work-life balance and increase productivity

Action items

- Coordinate with the Mongolian team to initiate translation of all course materials to Mongolian with the intent to deliver two rounds of courses in 2025.

VAST FACILITATOR COURSE FEEDBACK

Most participants strongly agreed that the course was relevant to them and would use the new skills acquired in their everyday work.

What went well

Participants were highly engaged and motivated to try VAST techniques. The spaces were quiet, well lit and allowed participants to physically comfortable to enable skill acquisition. Most were already familiar with the space so little need for wayfinding which made for better timekeeping.

International instructors were flexible and very in-tune with reading the room. The team worked seamlessly and were able to modify, in real time, content delivery and modify PowerPoints as needed to facilitate learning in this ESL group.

Participants really flourished in the simulation spaces as noted by one of the Day 1 reflections, "less talking, more action". The instructional team kept this in mind every day and tried to provide more hands-on/conversations rather than focus on the didactic nature of the lectures.

General TMH for participants reflected the new skills acquired and they are noted below.

Challenges / Improvements

The single most challenge was language and this is noted in the recommendations section. Although participants were bilingual, they struggled with the massive amount of information relayed via PowerPoints and videos.

By the end of Day 1 feedback from the Mongolian planning team noted that reading English subtitles were easier for them to understand what was happening in the videos. Therefore, the sim coordinator provided English subtitles for the Sully video and Elaine Bromiley, both key for demonstrating non-technical skills (NTS).

Take home messages (from participants)

- I want to be a person who is not talking too much, but listen others. Be patient, respect others.
- Debriefing techniques
- Good communication, team work.
- Stop judging first but try to understand why this kind of action arise and focus on reason
- Useful scenarios (briefing) in anaesthesia residents and young doctors
- Sequence of action and team work
- Simulation training concept
- How to shape the Simulation design.
- Debriefing method
- make the quick decision
- Recognizing situation awareness (SA), declaring SA to team and call correct help, allocating team members role
- Clear communication, clear loud declaration of crisis is important. Clear crisis instruction is vital
- Non-technical skills
- Clear communication between every member of team is very important
- Good judgment, open questions skill.
- supportive team working
- Allocating roles to every member, they can help me
- Close loop communication, sharing thoughts

Recommendations

- With and ESL group of learners, repeating the same scenario for both groups in the practice sessions is key. This helped the participants concentrate on running the scenario and de-briefing rather than trying to learn the scenario content. The groups learned from each other and each group debrief/TMH were different.
- Having some phrases to help the participants start a de-brief off, especially for those whose first language isn't English.
- An additional session was introduced, involving small groups, to practice debriefing through the utilization of concise vignettes.
- Adaptation of the course to run over 3 days allowed participants ample time for scenario execution and debrief practice. This adaptation was particularly useful in LMIC context, where participants would not have encountered the same extent of simulation training as their counterparts in high-income countries, resulting in less prior experience. Understanding local context is critical.
- 3 days course allowed more time for scenario teaching, which takes time especially for those new to scenario teaching
- Adaptation of scenarios so they are specific to the environment in which the participants are working in. Would encourage translated materials to reflect names/equipment/results, etc. to local standards and protocols.

Action items

- Start organizing the translation of all course materials (VW, FC, VC).
- Select date for next round of courses in Mongolia, including delivery in a district hospital setting.

Enablers, Challenges and Lessons learned

Enablers

Participant and faculty were familiar with each other.

Minimal hierarchy which allowed open communication.

Adequate space which allowed ease of transition to different activities.

Challenges

Language: English second language required constant, real-time modification in the way key concepts/content were delivered.

No previous simulation experience of participants.

Lessons Learned

Modification of subtitles, i.e., ESL version of PowerPoints and videos is highly recommended. Balancing flexibility while maintaining the course objectives and content is of ultimate importance.

Piloting newly translated course materials is a must. This enables translators to understand the concepts first, allowing for more accurate “VAST”-language translation. VAST materials are better translated with this in mind.

Recommendations

1. Consider non-technical skills lecture on Day 1 as an intro lecture, as learners had no experience with this term/concept - would make debriefing easier earlier
2. Three-day FC courses is a must in ESL environments. It gives more time for participants to accommodate ESL acquisition of skills, practice these skills, in particular debriefing.
3. The LMS system should provide a way for facilitators to provide their feedback, in addition to participants.
4. Day 3 agenda: suggest substituting, as we did, “Debriefing Conversation Starters” in place of the first session: Implementation Planning.
5. Ensure all videos should have English subtitles. This enables ESL participants’ understanding of the video content and also, in general, can counter poor audio quality in larger, noisier spaces.
6. Delivering the VAST course on the last day was useful but would encourage an abbreviated version to allow more time and reduce the stress on new facilitators.
7. Alert faculty that are delivering lectures that PPTs may require some kind of modification based on an ESL type version of lectures (PPTs and videos) as VAST concepts are difficult for learners with limited English.

Course Photos

Wellbeing



Facilitator Course







One-Day VAST Course



Social/Teambuilding





See you in 2025! We had a blast!!