



# VITAL ANAESTHESIA SIMULATION TRAINING



## **VAST SIMposium report – *Rwamagana, Rwanda***

*5-7 September 2022*

**Jon Bailey, Patty Livingston, Adam Mossenson, Michelle Murray,  
Gaston Nyirigira**

## Executive summary

### *Situation*

After a pandemic related pause in course activity for more than two years, the Vital Anaesthesia Simulation Training (VAST) SIMposium was offered to refresh skills for VAST facilitation, introduce VAST Wellbeing and strengthen the growing community of practice for simulation educators working in resource-limited settings.

### *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 Courses have been offered multiple times in seven countries: Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, India, Fiji, Canada, and Australia. Additional courses planned for 2020 and 2021 were cancelled due to the global pandemic. During the pause in course delivery, the VAST team focussed on developing new teaching materials, refining curricula and establishing an online platform to support hybrid in-person and online learning. With the gap in-person training for several years, many VAST facilitators had not been able to apply their facilitation skills during courses. People expressed being out of practice, feeling “rusty”, a loss of confidence and a sense of isolation. The VAST team considered it essential to reunite facilitators from diverse regions for skill renewal and reinvigoration and to share a common understand of the next steps for VAST. The three-day VAST SIMposium brought 42 simulation educators from 12 countries together for one day of VAST Wellbeing (a new course to reduce burnout and promote wellbeing) and two days of the VAST Facilitator Course.

### *Assessment*

The SIMposium was received with great enthusiasm. Participants valued learning with a global simulation community. They found the revised materials to be effective.

### *Recommendation*

SIMposium participants have been encouraged to stay connected via the VAST’s Slack communication platform, a recently implemented resource established to support VAST facilitator communication. Upcoming courses are planned for Fiji (September 2022), Honduras (December 2022), India (February 2023), Ethiopia (March/April 2023) and Senegal (2023). Simulation scenarios developed during the SIMposium will be review and added to VAST’s expanding scenario bank.

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## Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge financial support for the VAST SIMposium from the:

- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA)
- Department of Anesthesia, Pain Management and Perioperative Medicine, Dalhousie University
- Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society International Education Foundation (CASIEF)

## SIMposium attendees

| Instructors and participants |                              |                 |                          |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Name                         | Professional role            | Course role     | Workplace                |
| Fetiya Alferid               | Anesthesiologist             | Mentor          | Addis Abba, Ethiopia     |
| Jon Bailey                   | Anesthesiologist             | Instructor      | Halifax, Canada          |
| Julian Barnbrook             | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Prince George, Canada    |
| Katija Bonin                 | Anesthesia trainee           | Participant     | Halifax, Canada          |
| Amelia Crowther              | WFSA administration          | Participant     | London, United Kingdom   |
| Mohamed Elaibaid             | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Khartoum, Sudan          |
| Ryan Ellis                   | Anesthesia trainee           | Participant     | United Kingdom           |
| Angela Enright               | Anesthesiologist             | Mentor          | Victoria, Canada         |
| Shelley Gower                | Nursing educator/researcher  | Participant     | Perth, Australia         |
| Carolina Haylock-Loor        | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | San Pedro Sula, Honduras |
| Chris Kennedy                | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Perth, Australia         |
| Sailaja Kamabathula          | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Hyderabad, India         |
| Oumar Kane                   | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Dakar, Senegal           |
| Karima Khalid                | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Tanzania                 |
| Jackson Kwizera              | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Kigali, Rwanda           |
| Patty Livingston             | Anesthesiologist             | Instructor      | Halifax, Canada          |
| Laurence Mizero              | Simulation coordinator       | Sim coordinator | Kigali, Rwanda           |
| Adam Mossenson               | Anesthesiologist             | Instructor      | Perth, Australia         |
| Mamadou Mour Traore          | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Dakar, Senegal           |
| Gatwiri Murithi              | Simulation coordinator       | Sim coordinator | Kenya                    |
| Michelle Murray              | Nurse/simulation coordinator | Sim coordinator | Comeauville, Canada      |
| Ravi Nagaprasad              | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Hyderabad, India         |
| Vibhavari Naik               | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     |                          |
| Gita Nath                    | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Hyderabad, India         |
| Etienne Nsereko              | Non-physician anesthetist    | Participant     | Kigali, Rwanda           |
| Gaston Nyirigira             | Anesthesiologist             | Mentor          | Huye, Rwanda             |
| Christophe Niyongombwa       | Simulation coordinator       | Sim coordinator | Kigali, Rwanda           |
| Stephen Okelo                | Anesthesiologist             | Participant     | Kenya                    |
| Amal Paonaskar               | WFSA administration          | Participant     | London, United Kingdom   |
| Dave Rawson                  | Anesthesiologist             | Mentor          | Melbourne, Australia     |
| Gilles Rwibuka               | Non-physician anesthetist    | Participant     | Bujumbura, Burundi       |

|                 |                                      |                 |                        |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Fran Saddington | Anesthesiologist                     | Participant     | London, United Kingdom |
| Peter Saria     | Anesthesiologist                     | Participant     | Tanzania               |
| Heather Scott   | Obstetrician                         | Participant     | Halifax, Canada        |
| Mahelet Tadesse | Anesthesiologist                     | Mentor          | Addis Abba, Ethiopia   |
| Vai Upadhye     | Anesthesiologist                     | Mentor          | Pune, India            |
| Sara Whynot     | Research facilitator/sim coordinator | Sim coordinator | Halifax, Canada        |
| Elliot Wollner  | Anesthesiologist                     | Participant     | Melbourne, Australia   |
| Julia Wright    | Anesthesia trainee                   | Mentor          | Halifax, Canada        |
| Amos Zacharia   | Anesthesiologist                     | Participant     | Tanzania               |
| Naima Zakaria   | Anesthesiologist                     | Participant     | Tanzania               |



Red dots indicate locations where SIMposium attendees work

## Venue and equipment

The VAST SIMposium was held at the Dereva Hotel in Rwamagana, Rwanda. This location is a little over an hour from Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. The venue was ideal – quiet, comfortable accommodation, lots of outdoor space, greenery, two good conference rooms, gazebos for running al fresco simulation and debriefing, excellent buffet meals and helpful hotel staff. It worked well to have all the SIMposium participants together in a location free from distractions where people were able to share meals and informal conversation outside of the formal program. There is a full set of VAST equipment in Rwanda, so no new materials were needed.



## Program

### **VAST Wellbeing**

VAST Wellbeing was introduced at the SIMposium. This new course was developed in response to requests from previous VAST Course participants. In the second day of the VAST Course, there is a scenario that centres on burnout. This scenario inevitably generates a rich conversation as participants appreciate a safe space to discuss this challenging topic that is common but often ignored in their working environments. VAST Course participants consistently asked to learn more about burnout and its prevention. For this reason, the one-day VAST Wellbeing Course was developed by a team that included VAST instructors, a psychologist, a mindfulness expert and a representative from a resource-limited setting. The program was beta-tested in May 2022 in Canada, with modifications made based on participant feedback.

VAST Wellbeing was designed to promote personal and professional wellbeing and to reduce burnout for healthcare providers in resource-limited settings. The course introduces simple mindfulness exercises that have been demonstrated to contribute to wellbeing, teaches burnout recognition through video and discussion, and challenges participants to develop tangible action items to improve their own wellbeing and wellbeing in the workplace. Since this is a new program, our team has designed a mixed methods research study to evaluate the course's impact. Informal comments from participants were that VAST Wellbeing is valuable and important. There is great interest in expanding this program to reach many healthcare providers who could benefit.

### **VAST Facilitator Course**

This was the first time the VAST Facilitator Course had been delivered in two and a half years. During the pandemic, when courses were paused, extensive revisions were made to the curriculum. New content includes a session on Debriefing that introduces the VAST Debriefing Framework and uses short video clips to demonstrate techniques. A team building game called “hand it on” was added to the Non-Technical Skills session. New sessions have been added on Simulation in Context and Conversational Techniques. The latter focusses on formulating questions that promote reflective debriefing.

#### *Facilitation and debriefing practice*

The bulk of the course involves practice of the four elements of scenario facilitation: briefing, iPads/prompts, debriefing, and co-facilitation. Participants worked in groups of four to practice these skills while running scenarios for another small group. Following each scenario, a meta-debrief was conducted on the process of scenario facilitation. During the facilitation and debriefing practice, mentors led their teams under the supervision of experienced VAST instructors. This allowed the mentors to improve their leadership skills and expand their teaching experience to facilitator training.

#### *Scenario design*

Participants also worked in small groups to design new scenarios de novo using the VAST scenario template. On the final day, groups delivered the new scenarios they had designed. These were all high-quality and it was impressive to see the progress in a few short days. The new scenarios will be refined and added to the VAST Scenario Bank.

### **8<sup>th</sup> All Africa Anesthesia Congress**

The 8<sup>th</sup> All Africa Anesthesia Congress was held in Kigali immediately after the VAST SIMposium. While this was organized separately, there was provision for holding a second VAST Wellbeing workshop with a different group of people. Participants from this VAST Wellbeing course were also offered the opportunity to participate in the mixed method study evaluating VAST Wellbeing.

## Summary of participant course evaluations and informal feedback

Participants found the SIMposium valuable. There was a high level of engagement and motivation to continue delivering VAST Courses and to implement VAST in new regions. Participants appreciated that the program was well organized and the content of high quality. They appreciated meeting colleagues from around the world who are sharing similar challenges with simulation-based education. The feedback on the new debriefing session and the non-technical skills game was positive. As always, people would like more time for practice. Facilitation skills are complex to learn, and more mentorship is required than can be offered in a short course.

## Challenges and lessons learnt

Given the challenges in bringing 41 people from 12 countries together in the aftermath of a pandemic, the VAST SIMposium was a massive success. The course was delivered smoothly. Everyone who planned to attend was able to attend. One person had a flight delay but was still able to attend the full program as VAST Wellbeing was repeated during the 8<sup>th</sup> All Africa Anesthesia Congress.

The perpetual challenge is maintaining momentum and creating more opportunities for ongoing mentorship so that participants can consolidate new skills. There are plans underway for a number of courses in 2023.

## Future directions

Plans are underway for the following:

1. Fiji: VAST Facilitator Course and modified VAST Course during the Pacific Society of Anesthesia meeting in Fiji 24-30 September 2022
2. Latin America: VAST Facilitator Course (in English) and VAST Course (in Spanish) in Honduras 6-10 December 2022. VAST Course materials are being translated into Spanish.
3. India: plans for VAST Facilitator Course and VAST Course in Pune, India in February 2023. There is a goal to implement the VAST Foundation Year following this training.
4. Ethiopia: planning is underway for a VAST Facilitator Course and VAST Course in Jimma, Ethiopia in March/April 2023.
5. Senegal: planning is underway for collaboration with Mercy Ships to conduct a VAST Facilitator Course and VAST Course in Dakar, Senegal in 2023. Course materials need to be translated into French.
6. There is interest in additional training in Kenya, with a goal of implementing the VAST Foundation Year there.
7. There is interest from partners in Sudan, Burundi and Somaliland for ongoing support and exploration of the potential for implementation of VAST programs.
8. Research studies are underway to assess VAST Wellbeing and the impact of the VAST SIMposium on building a community of practice for global simulation educators.

## Appendix I – Course Photos





















