

Training and practice of cardiac ultrasound in non-cardiac surgery

Dr Vik Singh

Cardiac ultrasound is becoming an intricate part of the perioperative pathway, covering all aspects from risk stratification, intraoperative management and complications post operatively. Anaesthetists play an increasing role in the delivery of this service.

In 2014, An ANZCA professional document was created around the training and practice of perioperative cardiac ultrasound in adults. This document highlights the criteria for usage, training, and competency in cardiac ultrasound. We review this document, and this information is then compared to the various qualifications and examinations in echocardiography around the world. This essentially is the pathway to becoming a credentialled non cardiac echocardiography anaesthetist.

Almost a decade has passed since the creation of the ANZCA guideline and there remains limited evidence around the usage of echocardiography in non-cardiac surgery and the diagnostic indications, complication rates and practical aspects of its implementation. We look at position statement around the usage of echocardiography in non-cardiac transplant surgery by the Society for Advancement for Transplant Anaesthesia.

Finally, we finish with a homegrown example of a perioperative echocardiography service created using the above principles to improve accessibility of echocardiography for non-cardiac anaesthetists.

