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COVID-19

JOINT STATEMENT – THE CRITICAL CARE SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (CCSSA) AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS (SASA)

Introduction

The CCSSA and SASA are volunteer associations, not for gain, whose purposes are to enhance the practice of anaesthesia and critical care, in the interests of best patient care. The members of these two organisations shall be called upon to play a critical role in the treatment of patients needing hospital care in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further, as the technical experts, with access to and information from our international colleagues who are further along the infection curve than South Africa, we have unique knowledge and skills that we MUST apply in preparing the country for COVID-19 and steering us through the pandemic. CCSSA and SASA are not, however, the only skilled clinicians at this time, and we welcome the input and collaboration of all other clinician groups.

Current Status

Both organisations have formed task teams to provide guidelines, guidance and communication to members. We have active leadership and working groups, applying themselves night and day in the development of position statements, Guidelines and driving focussed efforts.

It is specifically noted that these teams are NOT working in isolation from one another. While SASA and CCSSA already have a standing memorandum of understanding to collaborate, this is also not a time for separation or duplication. As such, members from both organisations are working closely with one another and are engaging collaboratively in each working group.

Co-ordination and Collaboration

SASA and CCSSA will be publishing guidelines from their own organisations to their stakeholders. However, these will also be endorsed, as appropriate, by one another, and shared on the other's platforms. Members will see numerous co-branded documents.

Both organisations also urge all members to work closely and collaboratively with one another at a regional and local level. We will need to lean on one another, support one another and jointly take the lead in our environments.

We call upon any other clinician group to join these collaborative efforts.

Conclusion

We have extremely limited resources and will have to apply all of our efforts collectively and innovatively to overcome the challenging times that lie ahead. Let us stand together – public sector, private sector, all disciplines and all care teams.

Signed CCSSA and SASA EXCO

Queries can be emailed to covid19@sasaweb.com and secretariat@criticalcare.org.za