Darling’s bumpy road

Whilst sitting on the 8.25am outward-bound flight to Edinburgh, the tabloid headlines ‘Darling warns of a bumpy road ahead’ peered above the headrest in front of me. To my left I was flanked by surgical colleagues studiously examining the ultrasound images contained within an article; the two events caused me to wonder how Darling’s bumpy road may affect perioperative care.

Michael Nicholas’s critical review also draws our attention to the ‘political, legislative and socioeconomic factors that influence’ working practices. He raises several arguments relating to the movement of creating opportunities for staff to develop their skills. His example, the Surgical Care Practitioner role, is still at the centre of much controversy to which he advises that such innovation in practice must be defined, supported and regulated like any other professional group. His critical review alludes to changes that should take place through effective communication with all concerned, including making the patient aware that non-medical staff may facilitate their treatment.

Julie Quick considers the main objectives of developing communication in informed consent and that practitioners must provide accurate and timely advice to the patient. Moreover, she highlights the importance of why we undertake effective communication. The guiding of patients through important information will hopefully lead to informed consent, reduced anxiety and patient cooperation. I am sure many will agree that effective communication is one of many hallmarks associated with quality patient care and that we all have a part to play.

Although Darling may have predicted a bumpy road ahead because of the difficult financial climate, effective perioperative communication continues to be a strong feature among the multidisciplinary team. Facing and conquering any challenge is a collective responsibility for the nurse, ODP, doctor and health care support staff. Similarly, in aviation the ground crew, cabin attendants and the flight team all have a part to play in ensuring their passengers arrive safely.

The captain’s announcement of ‘ten minutes to land’, gave me reassurance that my experience was coming to an end. Although my flight had a bumpy landing, no broken bones occurred but I was left wondering if the support team realised how important they were in keeping me safe! This also applies to our patients; do our health care support staff realise how vital they are? I would be pleased to hear from any health care support staff that wish to share their perioperative experiences. Please do get in touch.

Brian Smith
Editor
editor@afpp.org.uk

FROM THE EDITOR
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The Association for Perioperative Practice
Daisy Ayris House
6 Grove Park Court
Harrogate HG1 4DP
United Kingdom

Email: hq@afpp.org.uk
Telephone: 01423 508079
Fax: 01423 531613