

## New Anaesthesia Workforce Map



The World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists (WFSA) has officially launched an online resource tool that maps the total number of anaesthesia providers worldwide. Based on this tool, many countries report a total of anaesthesia providers less than 5 per 100,000 population. This highlights the crisis in the surgical and anaesthesia workforce that leaves nearly 5 billion people without access to safe and affordable anaesthesia and surgical care as estimated by The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery.

The information for this Workforce Map was derived through a survey that was conducted by the WFSA. The survey was sent to all member societies and information was also collected from anaesthesiologists during international conferences. In addition, anaesthesia providers in non-WFSA-member countries were also contacted.

In 2015, the World Health Assembly had resolved to strengthen "emergency and essential surgical care and anaesthesia as a component of universal health coverage".

The new online tool by WFSA highlights the huge shortage in anaesthesia workforce worldwide. It also highlights the gap between the rich and the poor such as a 35-fold difference between the anaesthesia provider workforce density in Germany as compared to the Democratic Republic of Congo and a 50-fold difference between the workforce density in the US compared to Indonesia. US has over 100,000 anaesthesia providers to serve a population of 323.9 million while Indonesia only has 1950 to serve 258.3 million.

No countries in North America or Europe reported a total anaesthesia provider number of less than 6 per 100,000 population but many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the West Pacific, the Caribbean, Central America and South America, South East Asia, North Africa, the Middle East and West Asia face anaesthesia and surgical workforce shortages.

Dr Wayne Morriss, Director of Programmes at the WFSA, shared the significance of the findings: "We know that there is a problem, and we know that there is a solution. Anaesthesia provision is affordable with research from the World Bank highlighting a return on investment as high as ten to one. The map shows that substantial investment in educating anaesthesia providers is required as soon as possible, and the WFSA is well placed to work with the WHO, its own member societies, other specialist medical organisations, governments, NGOs and country level health systems to correct the workforce gap and achieve safe anaesthesia for all by 2030."

Source: [WFSA](#)  
Image Credit: WFSA

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