

SPANZA GUIDELINE AND STATEMENT ENDORSEMENT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Society for Paediatric Anaesthesia in New Zealand and Australia (SPANZA) advocates for appropriate standards of care and education in paediatric anaesthesia, pain management and peri-operative care. We seek excellence in our practice and promote this through communication between society members and liaison with similar paediatric anaesthesia organisations in other parts of the world. We support and encourage research recognising that the knowledge gained will benefit the children we care for.
- 1.2. “Guidelines” offer advice on clinical and non-clinical aspects of the practice of anaesthesia and perioperative medicine, reflecting expert consensus supported by other evidence when available. “Statements” define the position of SPANZA on certain matters.
- 1.3. SPANZA’s endorsement of a Guideline or Statement is a mechanism to promulgate best current opinion or advice on a topic or matters where this clarity is beneficial to both the anaesthetic community and to the children and young people that this community cares for. Endorsement of documents is able to promote quality of care and education. It is also able to highlight areas where further knowledge is required and thus promote the science and advancement of paediatric anaesthesia, perioperative care and paediatric pain management. By endorsing relevant guidelines and statements, SPANZA is able to support its mission.
- 1.4. The SPANZA Guidelines Committee (GC) will consist of 5 to 7 SPANZA members appointed by the SPANZA executive. One of these members will be a member of the SPANZA executive. The role of the committee will be to administer the endorsement process, nominate individuals to form a Document Endorsement Group (DEG). The DEG’s task is to implement the assessment tool and in conjunction with the GC make a recommendation to the SPANZA executive to either accept or reject a Guideline or Statement for endorsement.
- 1.5. SPANZA and the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) share a common memorandum of understanding (MOU). Within this MOU they agree to collaborate on the development of educational support and other professional resources relating to paediatric anaesthesia. In addition they agree to jointly consult on requests for policy advice or advocacy relating to paediatric anaesthesia. SPANZA has, with permission, adapted ANZCA’s Policy on Endorsement of Externally Developed Guidelines (ANZCA Professional Document A02) for its guideline development and endorsement.
- 1.6. A guideline assessment tool has been created to articulate SPANZA’s approach to endorsing externally developed guidelines and statements and clarify the Society’s expectations in this regard. The tool supports standardised decision-making in relation to endorsement of externally developed guidelines and clarity around the strength of evidence behind the endorsed guideline or statement. Consultation of this tool is essential prior to submitting a guideline or a statement for endorsement. This guideline assessment tool is freely available on the SPANZA website.

2. ADMINISTRATION OF ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

- 2.1. A request for endorsement of a statement or guideline may come to SPANZA from members, non-members or external bodies. All requests for guideline or statement endorsement shall be lodged with the executive via the online request for endorsement form. All requests for endorsement shall include a statement outlining the need, aim and scope of the guideline or statement. The executive shall ensure that those making a request for endorsement have access to the guideline assessment tool.
- 2.2. The executive shall agree that the guideline or statement is relevant to SPANZA's core business. The executive will refer the request to the Guidelines Committee (GC) for formal assessment.
- 2.3. The GC will compile a list of SPANZA members with interests in the topic and form a Document Endorsement Group (DEG). The methods for establishing group membership may include expressions of interest, informal enquiry and published expertise/research interest. The GC will contact the identified members and request their involvement in reviewing and endorsing a guideline or statement.
- 2.4. The guideline and statement endorsement tool will be used for formal assessment by the DEG. The process of assessment will include external consultation where appropriate.
- 2.5. A time frame will be set for the assessment of each request. This time frame will depend on the complexity and breadth of the document being assessed. The suggested time frame is 2 weeks to 6 weeks for endorsing a statement and 2 weeks to 3 months for endorsing a guideline. A need for greater urgency may require a shorter time frame. In situations where the work required is likely to be more onerous the time frame may extend to greater than 3 months.
- 2.6. Once reviewed and expert opinion received the GC will make a recommendation to the SPANZA executive to accept or reject the guideline or statement for endorsement.
- 2.7. The executive will consider and advise the GC and DEG of its final decision. The executive will communicate SPANZA's final decision to the authors or to the person or group who made the request for guideline endorsement at the outset.
- 2.8. Endorsed guidelines or statements will appear on the SPANZA website within the Endorsed Guidelines and Statements Section. All endorsed guidelines or statements shall include a disclaimer, the date of endorsement and the date of review.
- 2.9. SPANZA endorsement of a guideline or statement shall be valid for a period of 1 to 5 years, depending on the stability or certainty of the domain of the guideline or statement. Endorsement shall be limited to the current version of the guideline or statement, subsequent revisions shall be submitted to the Guideline Committee for re-assessment.
- 2.10. Revocation of Endorsement. Guideline endorsement can be revoked by the SPANZA executive at their discretion, and on advice from the guideline committee
- 2.11. Disclaimer
 - 2.11.1. SPANZA Documents

2.11.1.1. Statements and Guidelines that are endorsed, developed or co-badged by the Society for Paediatric Anaesthesia in New Zealand and Australia (SPANZA) (referred to as SPANZA Documents in this Disclaimer) are intended to apply to all locations and circumstances where anaesthetists provide clinical care for children in Australia and New Zealand. It is the responsibility of the practitioner to assess the circumstances, and the relevant application of any SPANZA Document in each case. SPANZA Documents are not prescriptive, and should be used in conjunction with clinical judgement, to assist with decision making in clinical practice.

For example, it is recognized that there may be exceptional circumstances (for example some emergencies) in which the interests of patients override the requirement for compliance with part of the SPANZA Documents.

SPANZA considers that the process of the development of SPANZA Documents in accordance with the SPANZA Guidelines and Statement Endorsement is rigorous, and that their content was accurate and evidence-based at the time of publication.

SPANZA Documents, which may include documents written by other organisations and endorsed by SPANZA, are reviewed from time to time. It is the responsibility of practitioners to ensure that they use the most recent version. Practitioners should take into account any relevant information that may have been published or become otherwise available subsequently to relevant SPANZA Documents being drafted or reviewed.

2.11.2. SPANZA Website

2.11.2.1. While SPANZA endeavours to keep the information on its website (referred to as Website in this Disclaimer) accurate and relevant, it makes no warranties or representations of any kind concerning the accuracy or, clinical or other suitability of the information contained on the Website.

All such information is provided “as is”, and SPANZA takes no responsibility for matters arising from changed circumstances, or information or material which may have become available subsequently.

Further, SPANZA makes no representations that the Website will operate uninterrupted or error-free, or that the Website or the hosting server are free from viruses or other forms of harmful computer code.

2.11.3. No Liability

2.11.3.1. To the extent permitted by law, SPANZA is not responsible for any loss, damage, injury to property or person, and costs incurred or suffered directly or indirectly in connection with use of the SPANZA Documents or the SPANZA Website. The permitted use of SPANZA Documents and the SPANZA Website is under the condition that users release SPANZA from all liability (including in negligence) in respect of such use.

3. NOTIFICATION

3.1. Any endorsed guideline or statement should be notified to ANZCA, NZSA, ASA, PANNZ. Co-endorsing with ANZCA, ASA and NZSA shall be suggested where relevant.