The South African Perioperative Research Group (SAPORG) was founded in 2015. At the first SAPORG meeting held in Durban, perioperative research priorities for South Africa were agreed upon based on a Delphi consensus setting process conducted in the run-up to that meeting. The outcome of the meeting was the publication of ten perioperative research priorities for South Africa.¹ The establishment of SAPORG and the perioperative research priorities for South Africa could be considered an unprecedented success. Three of the ten priorities have been addressed; a national prospective observational study of the outcomes associated with paediatric surgical cases;² a national observational study of maternal and foetal outcomes following operative delivery in South Africa,³ and the development and validation of a risk stratification tool for South African surgery based on the South African Surgical Outcomes Study (SASOS) data.⁴ Furthermore, another two of the priorities are currently being addressed. The preparatory work for a randomised controlled trial of preoperative B-type natriuretic peptide-guided medical therapy to decrease major adverse cardiac events following non-cardiac surgery, forms part of the doctoral studies of Dr Christella Alphonsus, and the establishment of a national database of critical care outcomes, and critical care resources is on the agenda of the Critical Care Society of Southern Africa (CCSSA).

Despite these successes, there remains important work to be done to address the other five perioperative research priorities of South Africa. These include: i) a stepped-wedge trial of an enhanced recovery after surgery programme for (a) surgery, (b) obstetrics, (c) emergency surgery, and (d) trauma surgery; ii) a stepped-wedge trial of a surgical safety checklist on patient outcomes in South Africa; iii) a prospective observational study of perioperative outcomes after surgery in district general hospitals in South Africa; iv) short-course interventions to improve anaesthetic skills in rural doctors; and v) studies of the efficacy of simulation training to improve (a) patient outcomes, (b) team dynamics, and (c) leadership.¹

The success of SAPORG has quickly moved beyond the borders of South Africa, and indeed across Africa. This has led to the development of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPORG’s fourth annual meeting, a similar process unfolded with the establishment of ten perioperative research priorities for Africa, following a pre-meeting Delphi consensus process conducted across the continent with national leaders of the African Perioperative Research Group (APORG). Fast forward to 28th September 2019, and at SAPOG...