



ANZCA

Australian and New Zealand
College of Anaesthetists
and the Faculty of Pain Medicine



Australian Society of
Anaesthetists[®]

JOINT STATEMENT

28 August 2024

IV fluid shortage update

On Monday 26 August, ANZCA President Professor David Story and ASA President Dr Mark Sinclair met with representatives of the National Response Group, set up to assess and monitor the situation regarding potential shortages of intravenous (IV) crystalloid solutions in Australia.

Professor Story is also a member of the group.

While the situation varies from region to region, there have been concerns about availability across Australia.

However, we now believe there are no critical shortages. No widespread cancellations of elective procedures have been required, as was feared earlier on.

Nevertheless, anaesthetists are being asked to consider the need for perioperative IV fluids on a patient-by-patient basis, and to be judicious in their use.

Other approaches such as decreasing fasting times from clear fluids, using, for example, "SipTilSend" protocols, are also an option to avoid perioperative dehydration.

ANZCA and ASA recognise that implementing such protocols for the first time may present challenges, depending on individual hospital settings, and we are ready to assist with advice where needed.

The National Response Group assures us that every step is being taken to improve the supply of IV fluids, with Baxter Healthcare working to increase supply by expanding its manufacturing plant and importation of fluids from overseas.

The federal government believes this will increase supply by 22 million units over the next six months, which should outstrip demand, and that the situation is unlikely to deteriorate to a critical stage.

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