

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This sample letter is an **example** for ASA members to use as a **reference tool** when drafting responses to the editor of a newspaper or magazine, or other publications of interest. The notes in the margins of this document can serve as guides for drafting the text of member responses.

Best Practices

- Most publications have instructions on how to submit a letter to the editor on their Web sites. Many publications limit letters to the editor at 250 words, but the majority of policies usually range between 125 and 300 words.
- A letter to an editor is most effective when it can be linked to a recent article run by the publication and includes personal anecdotes as proof points.
- Remember who you are writing for...keep in mind your audiences' level of understanding and interest in the topic.
- Massage the messages of the Lifeline Campaign to work as proof points in your letter.
- Keep your response short and timely.

Sample Letter to the Editor

Broadly Reference the article you are responding to

Reference article date and section

Reading *Shelia Crumb's* overview of the role of Certified Registered Nursing Anesthetists or CRNAs in *Tuesday's Health section*, I felt it might be helpful to add another perspective. While CRNAs argue that there are many misperceptions about their profession, *there are also a number of misperceptions about their supervising physicians, anesthesiologists, as well.*

Relate the article to the field and your concerns

Ground your argument in citable research

Recent research conducted by the American Society of Anesthesiology (ASA) on the perceptions of anesthesiologists found that both patients, and even the medical community, are often unaware of the important role anesthesiologist's play.

Use quantifiable data to support your premise

However, the reality is that *anesthesiologists are highly trained medical doctors* who make lifesaving surgery and pain management possible. *Anesthesiologists provide or oversee more than 90 percent of the 40 million estimated anesthetics administered in the U.S. each year.* The practice of anesthesiology is extremely complicated and can often mean the difference between life and death. *Anesthesiologists treat patients with multiple complications from pulmonary and cardiac to infection control and advanced life support.*

Reinforce that anesthesiologists have unique training

Use messages from the Lifeline Campaign as reinforcement

Expand the definition of anesthesiologists to include research, education, patient mgmt and advocacy

Furthermore, anesthesiologists support the medical field and its advancements through research, education, maintaining treatment guidelines, and fighting for laws that favor patient access and safety.

Anesthesiologists' rigorous training as medical doctors ensures the in-depth, critical knowledge needed to keep total watch over the human body, to keep people stable and intervene during surgery when they are not. *We make surgery a reality and our advancements are responsible for new surgeries, diagnostics and patient treatments in their specialty and beyond.*

Close by reinforcing the importance of anesthesiologists in making modern medicine possible

[Name], [Title], [City, State]