

# DEPARTMENT OF ANESTHESIOLOGY

VANDERBILT  UNIVERSITY

MEDICAL CENTER

Compassionate | Creative | Committed | Collaborative

## What is a CDA and why is it important?

CDA time is our Department's name for what is called "non-clinical time" in most other Departments. These are the days when faculty are engaged in administration, education, and scholarly activities without a clinical assignment. CDA days are critical for the Department's mission and the career development of the faculty. The Department is committed to providing appropriate CDA time, yet it is important to know that the CDA time is expensive and each day awarded is one less day available to provide patient care, affecting the number of faculty FTE required to cover the approximately 18,000 clinical day commitments of the Department. With few exceptions, the clinical effort of the faculty is by far the largest source of Department revenue, and the Department's faculty is the largest expense (perhaps 80% of the total budget). To minimize expenses, many institutes seek the fewest number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) faculty to meet their clinical day commitments.<sup>1</sup> Yet this does not provide faculty sufficient time to pursue administrative roles, education, and scholarly activities. The Department of Anesthesiology CDA program seeks to maximize returns on the investment in CDA time while judiciously using valuable Departmental resources.

Even if we weren't an academic Department, there would still be a need for some clinical faculty to have CDA. For example, in a practice group of our size some faculty would need time to attend to required leadership, administrative, quality assurance, and other activities, attend hospital committee and other institutional meetings, etc.

Further, and most germane to our Department, while providing clinical care is the most important mission, we have additional missions. We are expected to advance the scientific knowledge in our specialty (i.e. Scholarship), to disseminate current and new knowledge to the next generation of practitioners and other care providers (i.e., Education), and to advance our specialty and medicine more generally through various internal and external service activities (i.e., Leadership). All of these activities, largely performed by our faculty, require some amount of CDA time.

Thus, the **objective** of the CDA Program is to provide all clinical faculty with academic and administrative time to help advance their careers as well as to assist the Department in pursuit of its scholarship, education, and leadership missions

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<sup>1</sup> Coverage ratios (i.e., 1:1 if faculty are solo in a room, 2:1 with residents or SRNAs, 3:1 or higher when supervising CRNAs) affects revenue as well expenses. Note that this discussion excludes situations where CRNAs can practice independently as this is not allowed in Tennessee.