

# The Checklist Effect

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**“... That may bring the biggest value in saving lives:** by paring down and focusing not on saying ‘we’re going to solve all of it,’ but rather ‘let’s bring the basic accomplishments of the 19th century – safe anesthesia, and then infection reduction – to our patients around the world’... But how can we do it?”

The recorded words of surgeon and author Dr. Atul Gawande settled over the assembled crowd. The medical students, anesthesiologists, surgeons and nurses gathered had all made the journey to the Kimmel Center’s Perelman Theater in the heart of Philadelphia’s Center City district. The purpose was a special screening of the award-winning documentary “The Checklist Effect.”

The film had been commissioned by the Lifebox Foundation several years earlier. Lifebox is an international NGO and the only such organization focused solely on improving surgical care around the globe. The charitable organization was formed in 2011 in a cooperative effort by the Brigham and Women’s Hospital, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, the Association of Anesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland and the World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists.



In the seven years since, the foundation has distributed more than 15,000 durable, battery-powered pulse oximeters throughout 100 countries and trained more than 5,000 health care professionals in team-work skills for the O.R.

The June 16 event at the Kimmel Center had been organized with two purposes in mind. First, to illustrate the central nature of communication and teamwork in the delivery of safe patient care, particularly in high-risk health care settings. Second, to raise awareness of, and funding for, the mission of the Lifebox organization.

The documentary film was preceded with an introduction by Alexander Hannenberg, M.D., ASA past president and current ASA Chief Quality Officer. As a trustee of Lifebox, he provided an

overview of past successes and the foundation’s strategic goals for the future. Interested members can learn more at [www.lifebox.org](http://www.lifebox.org).

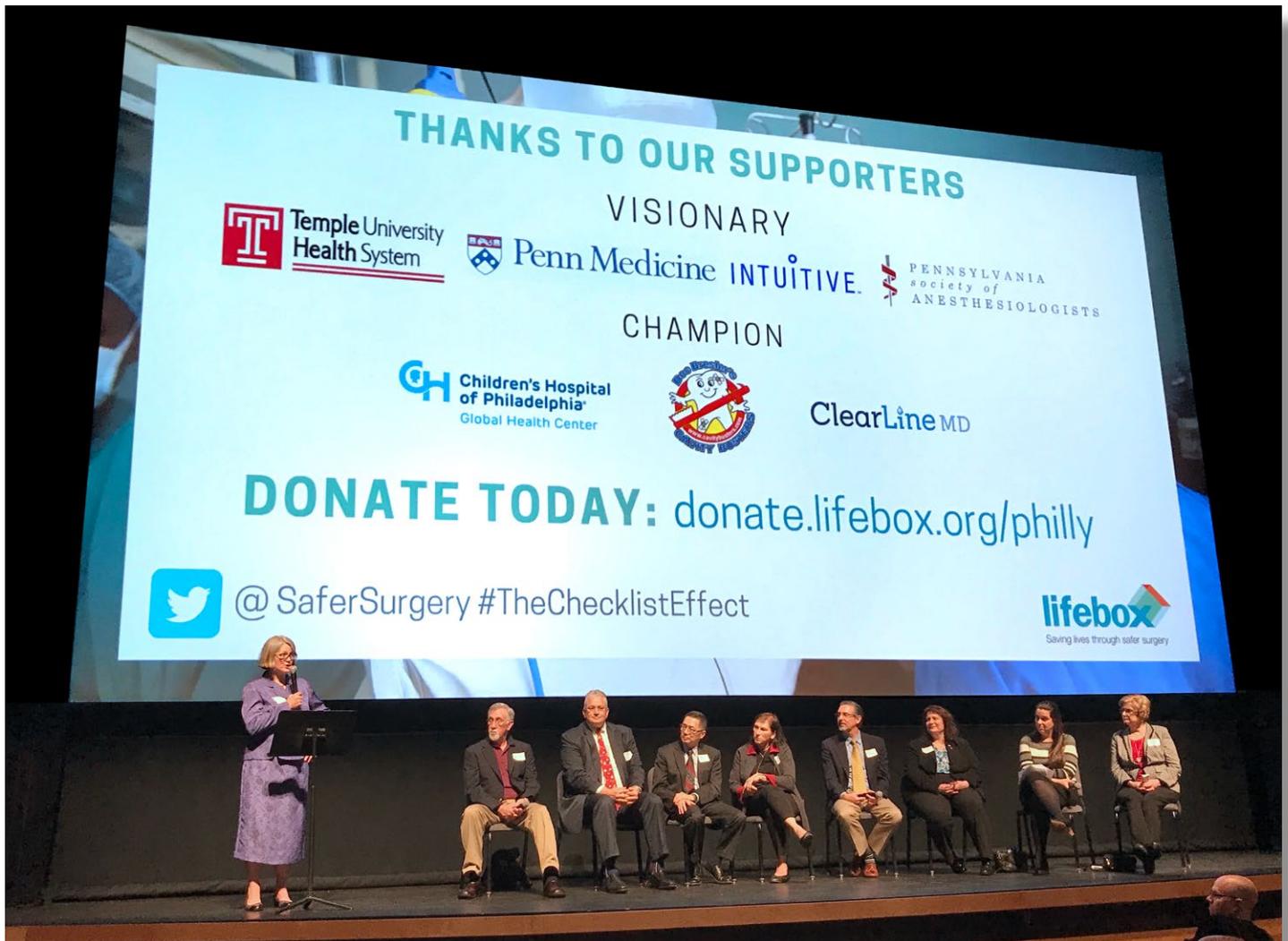
Following the film’s screening, a panel of health care experts took to the stage to discuss their experiences training surgical teams, both in the Philadelphia region and overseas. The group included two anesthesiologists, four



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From left to right: Moderator Elizabeth Drum, M.D.; panelists Rodger Barnette, M.D., FCCM; Owen Montgomery, M.D., NCMP; David Low, M.D.; Patricia Bailey, M.D.; Eric Gokcen, M.D.; Amanda Burden, M.D.; Missy Duran, MSN, CRNP, NNP-BC; and Kathleen Dunleavy, RN, BSN, CNOR.

surgeons, an O.R. nurse and a nurse practitioner. Together, they recounted decades of hard-earned wisdom and first-hand experiences involving surgical care in resource-constrained environments throughout the world.

The evening was a significant success, both from the perspective of its educational mission and in terms of raising awareness for the Lifebox Foundation. Ticket sales and sponsors (individual, corporate and academic) raised \$30,000 to benefit Lifebox. The Pennsylvania Society of Anesthesiologists (PSA) played a visible leadership role, contributing as an underwriter for the event and earning prominent billing in the program and during the introductory remarks. On behalf of the host committee, we would like to extend our thanks to the members of the PSA for their support of the event and the Lifebox Foundation. We are proud of the collaboration between Lifebox and ASA.



The Philadelphia team that coordinated the Lifebox event (from left): Rebecca Barnett, M.D.; Michael S. Green, D.O., M.B.A., FASA; Gordon Morewood, M.D., M.B.A., FASE; Elizabeth T. Drum, M.D.; and Daniel T. Dempsey, M.D.