

Colorectal cancer treatment in the country comparable to the city

Thursday 11 May, 2017

Surgeons at the Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) in Adelaide were given a presentation on the outcomes of surgical treatment for colorectal cancer in rural Australia over a decade.

The presentation was given by Dr David Smolilo, a third year general surgery Trainee in South Australia who is currently undertaking a PhD research project in the field of colonic motility.

Dr Smolilo said that colorectal cancer was the second most commonly diagnosed invasive malignancy in Australia.

“Results of some studies have suggested worse survival outcomes for cancer patients treated outside of major cities however this 10 year study has found that the treatment of rural colorectal cancer patients is comparable to that in the major cities.

“The aim of this study was to critically review the outcomes of surgical treatment for colorectal cancer patients in rural South Australia over a ten year period and it follows on from a previous five year analysis originating from the same institution (Mount Gambier Hospital),” Dr Smolilo said.

The outcome of all patients treated between January 2006 and December 2016 was included for all stages of disease and interventions performed and this included a total of 337 patients with a median follow up of 27 months.

83.1 per cent and 16.9 per cent underwent elective and emergency treatment respectively.

Ten year overall survival was 82 per cent for stage 1, 36 per cent for stage 2, 36 per cent for stage 3 and 0 per cent for stage 4.

The above results were achieved with a surgical 30 day mortality of 2 per cent, morbidity of 18 per cent and a median length of stay of 7 days.

“Colorectal cancer patients may undergo primary treatment in a rural setting in a safe manner and with oncological results comparable to tertiary centres.

“Maintenance of a cancer database is essential for quality assurance.”

Up to 1500 surgeons are meeting in the Adelaide Convention Centre this week for a series of workshops, discussions, Plenaries and masterclasses across a broad range of surgical issues.

About RACS

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RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.
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