
ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

MEDIA RELEASE



Surgeons welcome 2014 Perioperative Mortality report

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New Zealand surgeons have welcomed the release of the third annual report of the Perioperative Mortality Review Committee (PoMRC) saying it will stimulate discussion about perioperative deaths and provide another opportunity to review and improve current surgical practice.

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons said it fully supports the Committee's work as the purpose of the report is to enable a continuing reduction in perioperative harm and death.

The Chair of the College's New Zealand National Board, Mr Nigel Willis said, "What has happened in the past must be fully considered, discussed and evaluated so we can improve what will happen in the future."

The report examines data collected from across New Zealand and identifies areas of anaesthetic and surgical practice that merit further investigation.

Mr Willis said, "Although drawing comparisons between the perioperative mortality rates across differing health care systems can be problematic, New Zealand's rates are broadly consistent with those reported in other jurisdictions.

"There are positive indications with declining mortality rates for two major and common surgical procedures – cholecystectomy* and colorectal resection**. The figures appear to be at least comparable to those reported internationally.

"However, it is of some concern that Maori and Pacific patients appear to have higher incidence of acute surgery and lower incidence of elective surgery suggesting that there is still some variation in the level of access to health and surgical services.

"A key benefit of the PoMRC report is that we get to see these figures, to learn from them and to deliver even better service to the community.

"The College will continue to work with all relevant and interested stakeholders to improve the quality and safety of surgery in New Zealand," he said.

Ends:

Editor Note

* Gallbladder removal

** Operations involving removal of affected sections of the large intestine

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