
ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS MEDIA RELEASE



Friday 24 October 2014

Overweight Australians and obesity surgery a hot topic at Tasmanian Annual Scientific Meeting

Citing data from the World Health Organisation, Russian surgeon Alexandr Kuzminov says worldwide obesity has nearly doubled since 1980 and in Australia the numbers of overweight or obese Australians over the age of 18 has risen to 63.4 per cent.

Dr Alexandr Kuzminov runs the Russian National Bariatric Registry and is also a lecturer for postgraduate surgical trainees at the Russian Department of Surgery of Stavropol State Medical University.

Currently a PhD Student at the Menzies Research Institute in Hobart, Dr Kuzminov is sharing his experience in sleeve gastrectomy and speaking about the prevalence of different types of obesity surgery, at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' (RACS) Annual Scientific Meeting in Launceston today.

Dr Kuzminov says Australia is the only country in the world where laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding still prevails, while other countries prefer other procedures.

"This is especially true for Tasmania, where the proportion of bandings exceeds 90 per cent," Dr Kuzminov says.

"In the USA the preference is for gastric bypass, for South America, Asia and some European countries it is sleeve gastrectomy."

"I think that Australian bariatric surgeons should expand their range of bariatric procedures and this trend is emerging, but not in all states," the Russian surgeon said.

Dr Kuzminov advocates sleeve gastrectomy as a procedure that he says is faster and easier than gastric bypass and one that he suggests is more effective than gastric banding.

"My point is that patients should have more information to weigh up all the pros and cons to be able to not only choose their own procedure but have access to the procedure they choose," Dr Kuzminov said.

The RACS Tasmanian Annual Scientific Meeting (ASM) attracts a strong following of leading surgeons from across Tasmania, who attend to pick up new skills, learn about the latest in surgical techniques and statistics and gain valuable knowledge across a broad range of surgical procedures.

Media inquiries: Manager Communications & Advocacy (03) 9249 1263 or 0429 028 933

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Mental health in the medical profession will also feature at the conference with a presentation from Associate Professor Michael Baigent, a clinical academic psychiatrist in the Department of Psychiatry at Flinders Medical Centre in South Australia.

Other presentations include the influence of smoking on intracranial aneurysm rupture rates, novel bone graft techniques for hand surgery and issues relating to melanomas, social media for surgeons and the health of medical practitioners.

ENDS:

***Media Note:** The Tasmanian ASM runs from 8.30am to 4.30pm Saturday 25 October at Peppers Seaport Hotel in Launceston.*

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

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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