



ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **Greater support for smaller metropolitan and regional hospitals needed**

**Friday 6 May, 2011**

Delegates to the Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons have been told that smaller metropolitan and regional hospitals must be adequately funded to allow surgeons to provide up-to-date procedures for common surgical conditions, including newer laparoscopic and other minimally-invasive techniques.

Mr Robert Claxton, a General Surgeon at Sydney's Canterbury Hospital, told delegates that providing smaller hospitals with the appropriate up-to-date equipment and training would allow surgeons and registrars to do more high-volume common procedures that would ease the burden on major city hospitals.

Mr Claxton said metropolitan general hospitals and regional hospitals are already carrying out a range of laparoscopic procedures and other video-assisted procedures, but in the past have had great difficulty in obtaining resources to keep up-to-date.

"Smaller hospitals can do this work, such as gall bladder surgery, hernia surgery and other abdominal surgery, very successfully using new technology if they are adequately resourced," Mr Claxton said.

"Over the past few decades there have been massive and rapid advances in medical techniques and technology, but surgical staff at smaller hospitals cannot keep up with this unless they are appropriately resourced. Consultants and registrars should receive the necessary training as these new techniques are introduced and they should be provided with the equipment necessary to undertake them.

"In the past, smaller hospitals were often very poorly resourced. While there has been an improvement in this area, there is need for further improvement.

"If the smaller facilities are funded appropriately, the major city hospitals would not be as overburdened as they are now, and more patients could be treated in an appropriate, safe and cost-effective way – often nearer to their homes."

Mr Claxton is the Administrative Head of Surgery at Canterbury Hospital. His presentation is one of hundreds at this year's ASC, covering all surgical specialties and aspects of surgical history and education. Nearly 2,000 delegates are expected to attend the ASC, which runs from 2 to 6 May and is being held at the Adelaide Convention Centre. The ASC program is available online at [www.surgeons.org](http://www.surgeons.org)

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