



ROYAL AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Surgical anatomy course proves popular with junior surgeons

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As controversy reigns over the quality of anatomy teaching in undergraduate medical courses, a postgraduate diploma course in surgical anatomy offered by the University of Otago is proving a great success.

Delegates to the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons have been told that the course, which was launched in 2009, runs from February to September inclusive and consists of two components: (1) 24 weeks of distance learning, which includes selected readings, podcasts, questions and summative research informed essays on topics of surgical anatomy, and; (2) two separate two-week periods of intensive campus-based tuition and whole body dissection (maximum 4 students per cadaver) assessed by vivas and a class presentation.

Professor Mark Stringer, of the University of Otago's Department of Anatomy told delegates the campus-based instruction is delivered by two surgical anatomists with additional expert input from a broad range of specialist surgeons and radiologists.

"The diploma aims to equip junior surgeons with a sound understanding of regional anatomy relevant to common diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, together with an understanding of common or important anatomical variants," Professor Stringer said.

"Close collaboration with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons was essential when developing and accrediting the qualification. Rigorous internal and external review encourages the maintenance of high educational standards.

"The popularity of the course (28 applicants for 16 places in 2009, 38 applicants for 22 places in 2010, and 81 applicants for 24 places in 2011) underlines the demand for this education. However, enrolments have been deliberately restricted to maximise quality.

"Establishing a diploma of surgical anatomy requires a dedicated team of individuals, setting and maintaining appropriate educational standards, and close collaboration with the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons," he said.

Professor Stringer's 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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