Diabetes related amputation putting strain on hospital resources

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Surgeons attending the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) Annual Scientific Congress (ASC) were told that the Australasian Vascular Audit (AVA) database, established in 2010, was recently analysed to better understand and calculate the incidence of amputation and associated hospitalisation across Australia and New Zealand.

Vascular Surgery Service Registrar, Dr Guilherme Pena’s presentation at the Annual Scientific Congress in Adelaide today further discussed the prevalence and cost of diabetes in the field of vascular surgery.

The analysis from Dr Guilherme Pena of the Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH), was based on data collected from the AVA over six years from 2010-2016. Total admission costs were also examined within the RAH.

A total of 20,669 amputations were recorded within this time frame, 13,515 being minor amputations (amputation of a hand or foot, or of a part thereof). 12,155 amputations were performed in Australia and 1400 were performed in New Zealand.

Dr Pena identified that among those who underwent minor amputations, 79 per cent had diabetes and 62 per cent had a history of smoking.

Data found during this study also indicates that more than 7000 major (amputation of the lower limb above the ankle or of the upper limb above the wrist) amputations were performed, and of this number, 60.5 per cent of patients were diabetic and 67 per cent had a history of smoking.

Length of stay for minor amputations was 11 days compared with 20 days for major amputations.

“Using data collected at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, this equates to a total admission cost of more than $16,000 for minor amputations and $34,000 for major amputations,” Dr Pena said.

Dr Pena’s research concluded that the incidence of diabetes is higher than previously reported, which reflects the increasing incidence of the disease within the general population.

“We also found that the resource allocation by hospitals and direct economic burden of amputation in Australia and New Zealand is high.”

For more information about the Annual Scientific Congress please visit: www.asc.surgeons.org

About 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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