

Editorial

Doug McWhinnie

It's summer and it is the holiday season for many of us. As excellent holiday reading, we have three very different articles to peruse at leisure!

Ever since Henrik Kehlet published a multimodal approach to patient recovery following colorectal surgery in the 1990's, there has been a plethora of papers worldwide analysing the benefits of this approach of enhanced recovery. The concept has been applied across other subspecialties including orthopaedics and gynaecology, again with considerable success. In this issue of the journal, we have a paper from an orthopaedic group working in a district hospital in England, sharing their experiences in shortening the length of stay for lower limb arthroplasty and demonstrating how they focussed on each component of the patient pathway.

From Athens comes an audit of day case breast surgery, examining the outcomes of 173 consecutive patients with invasive breast cancer treated in the day surgery unit. Only one patient required an overnight stay and even then, this was due to a cardiac arrhythmia. As ever, patients were sent home with drains in-situ to be removed several days later. This audit confirms that day surgery for most breast procedures is now becoming mainstream, but remember just how long it has taken day case laparoscopic cholecystectomy to be accepted as the norm!

Our third paper is a review article from Stockholm concerning the fine tuning of depth of anaesthesia to improve post-operative delirium and cognitive dysfunction, especially in the elderly. Jan Jacobsen concludes that titration of anaesthetic delivery by the use of an EEG-based depth-of-anaesthesia monitor may improve the management of the elderly at risk for cognitive side effects but other factors such as the choice of main anaesthetic and anaesthetic technique are also important and may need further study.

Finally, while you are enjoying some well-earned time off, put your thoughts together and write an article for the journal on your return! Remember, we rely on our members for journal contributions so please furnish us with articles, case reports or anecdotal comments.

I look forward to your contributions!

Doug McWhinnie

Editor