

Prof. Garrett Lyndon Walsh: minimally invasive surgery continues to improve—benefiting more patients

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Editor's note

On September 5, 2017, the Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) 2nd Thoracic Surgery Symposium was held at the Professional Block, Queen Mary Hospital. Experts of Thoracic Surgery from around the world flocked to the symposium for an in-depth exchange, and sharing of special surgical cases that they have encountered. We are honored to invite Prof. Garrett Lyndon Walsh (*Figure 1*), who is very experienced in thoracic and vascular surgery, to have an interview with us.

Expert introduction

Prof. Garrett Lyndon Walsh is an expert of vascular surgery and thoracic surgery. He currently serves as the Executive Director of Surgical Facilities Expansion, the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA; and Professor of Surgery, Department of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, Division of Surgery, the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA.

Prof. Walsh obtained a Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree from Queen's University, Kingston in 1983. From 1986 to 1991, he served as a General Surgeon, Pediatric Cardiac Surgeon, Thoracic Surgeon, Cardiac and Vascular Surgeon respectively at McGill University, Montreal. He received the “Award for Clinical Safety & Effectiveness Outstanding Lecturer” by the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2007 and was recognized as one of the “Top Doctors” by *Texas Monthly* in 2008.

Prof. Walsh believed that every doctor ought to keep acquiring new surgical knowledge to make progress. Speaking of the high level of practicality of minimally invasive surgery (MIS), he stressed that MIS made open surgery better, and vice versa. Both surgical approaches are capable of maintaining better pain control, which is a crucial element in effectively curing patients. He deemed that the advance in equipment such as optical technology and lens minimization is a major factor to enhance the effectiveness



Figure 1 Prof. Garrett Lyndon Walsh.

of MIS.

Surgeons tend to focus on surgical procedures and details. Nonetheless, Prof. Walsh reminded surgeons that preoperative diagnosis is of paramount importance in determining how the surgery would be performed. Besides, a preoperative pain medication prescription is also vital to minimize the level of pain.

Prof. Walsh encouraged young surgeons to keep striving for improvements and seek second opinions whenever coming across any queries in terms of surgical methods and techniques. He advised young surgeons to take the initiative to watch more surgical videos to learn how a surgery can be done differently by other surgeons and then improve their own skills. Other than that, attending more academic lectures and listening to experts sharing special cases can further help them explore their own expertise and interest, which ultimately help them to specialize in a particular field in the future, and make contributions that benefit patients of the universe.

Interview questions

- (I) For MIS, some say that single-port is better than double/triple port thoracic surgery, while others say the exact opposite, what do you think?



Figure 2 Interview with Prof. Garrett Lyndon Walsh: minimally invasive surgery continues to improve—benefiting more patients (1). Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/article/view/25302>

- (II) How do you view the future trend of video-assisted thoracoscopic surgery (VATS) being widely applied in the medical field? Is there any room for improvement?
- (III) Regarding surgical techniques or surgeon's attitude, what do you think are the common mistakes of surgeons when they are performing surgery on patients?
- (IV) Do you have any tips/advice for young surgeons who would like to equip themselves better before

they engage in the field of vascular surgery and thoracic surgery?

- (V) As you are very committed to nursing and patient education, how do you maintain a balance between clinical practices and presenting lectures?

For more details, please check out the interview video below (Figure 2).

Acknowledgements

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Footnote

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References

1. Wong V. Interview with Prof. Garrett Lyndon Walsh: minimally invasive surgery continues to improve—benefiting more patients. *Asvide* 2018;5:559. Available online: <http://www.asvide.com/article/view/25302>

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