



AB093. Do Irish surgical trainees believe they are adequately trained to manage our ageing population?

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Background: There is an increasing awareness amongst surgeons that the ageing population is a challenge to the provision of our current service. Reports suggest that outcomes for older surgical patients could be enhanced with the routine involvement of medicine for the elderly (MFTE) physicians. The average age of the population in Ireland has continued to increase and has resulted in higher surgical admissions in this group. It is recommended that their care should be coordinated through a multidisciplinary team approach involving senior MFTE physicians, anaesthetists and surgeons. We conducted a nationwide survey to assess knowledge and beliefs of surgical trainees towards common perioperative problems encountered in older surgical patients.

Methods: An electronic survey was sent to all surgical trainees in Ireland via the Royal College of Surgeons in October 2019. A total of 83 eligible Irish surgical trainees responded to the survey.

Results: To date, 83.1% (n=69) believe that the management of medical problems affecting older surgical patients should feature in the surgical curricula. Just under half of the trainees (45.8%) felt that their training programme did not deliver adequate postgraduate training in the perioperative medical management of older surgical patients. Over three-quarters (n=61) of the respondents reported that they needed medical advice when managing older surgical patients, however 62.5% (n=50) had difficulty in obtaining MFTE support. The majority (87.7%) supported the need for closer integration with MFTE physicians in the care of older surgical patients, while 82.2% (n=60) felt that the care should be shared.

Conclusions: Delivering high quality care to older surgical patients is a challenge that has to be met. This study provides insight into the need for the development of services and surgical training.

Keywords: Ageing; medicine for the elderly; surgery; surgical training

doi: 10.21037/map.2020.AB093

Cite this abstract as: Kennedy CA, Hembrecht S, Shipway D, Barry K. Do Irish surgical trainees believe they are adequately trained to manage our ageing population. *Mesentery Peritoneum* 2020;4:AB093.