

British cancer op streamed in virtual reality 'world first'

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A British surgeon livestreamed a cancer operation using virtual reality technology which ran around a minute behind the actual surgery in case of complications

A British surgeon livestreamed a cancer operation using virtual reality technology on Thursday, in what he said was a world first that would help in training and allow doctors to advise on operations remotely.

Shafi Ahmed from the Royal London Hospital told AFP he had set up two rigs for 360-degree filming in the operating theatre, allowing anyone with a smart phone and [virtual reality](#) headset to feel present.

"We can teach people globally cheaply and more immersively," the surgeon told AFP ahead of a colon cancer operation expected to last at least two hours.

"It takes away the myth of surgery," said the doctor, who streamed another operation he was working on live two years ago with a Google Glass.

The patient, a British man in his 70s, has not been named but Ahmed said he was excited about the prospect of the surgery being watched internationally.

The live stream on www.medicalrealities.com ran around a minute behind the actual surgery in case of complications and Ahmed said only people aged 16 and above should watch it.

"We'll be taking away a segment of the bowel and joining it together again. It will all be done through keyhole surgery," Ahmed said.

"This is the first time that immersive 360 VR is used in surgery."

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