

Research examining the effect of complications and errors on surgeons

October 14 2016

A survey is being launched today [Friday 14 October 2016] to help understand the psychological impact on surgeons of errors or complications which arise as a result of surgical procedures.

It is hoped that the research will examine the impact that both complications and errors have on a surgeon's professional and personal life and generate a national picture of how [surgeons](#) react when things go wrong, and allow for the creation of intervention strategies that will mitigate the negative effects on surgeons and allow them to flourish within their work environment.

The research is being conducted by a research team at Bournemouth University and The Royal Bournemouth Hospital. PhD student Catherine Johnson said, "This research aims to generate a detailed understanding of the impact there is on surgeons when complications and errors occur. Once we understand what is going on we will be better placed to create support for surgeons to not only ameliorate the negative impacts of [adverse events](#), but to ensure that their practice is maintained to the highest possible standards.

"Once surgeons complete the survey, we will have a detailed idea of the ways in which they respond to complications and errors. We recognise that all surgeons are different and that we cannot put every individual who opts for a career as a surgeon into the same 'box'. However, because we have the opportunity to reach tens of thousands of surgeons with our survey and we hope to gain a much more detailed an understanding we

will have of the different ways in which surgeons may be affected by adverse surgical events. In this way we will gain valuable insights into how they might best be supported when such events inevitably occur."

The research is being supported by The Royal College of Surgeons England and the Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh.

Mr Kevin Turner, Consultant Urological Surgeon at Royal Bournemouth Hospital and a supervisor of the research project, said, "We all know that things can go wrong in surgery and dealing with the consequences of complications and errors is part and parcel of a surgeon's life. Very little is known about the impact that adverse events have on surgeons both professionally and personally. Our survey will provide a detailed national picture of the challenges, responses, and resilience surgeons have when dealing with adverse events and will allow the development of better targeted support. I have been very pleased to work with Bournemouth University on this project. Ultimately, I believe our research will help surgeons and will benefit our patients."

Catherine Johnson concluded, "The bottom line is that surgeons who are supported through adverse events will provide better patient care in the future. That is what we are aiming to achieve through this research and why it is so important."

More information: Surgeons across the UK are being encouraged to participate in the survey, which takes around 15 minutes to complete, and contribute to this important research, and can do so at www.surgeonwellbeing.co.uk.

Provided by Bournemouth University

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