“Great expectations”: anaesthetists meet in Canberra

The ideal anaesthetic for the obese pregnant patient is still undetermined, as are doses of appropriate pain relief, a meeting of anaesthetists held by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and the Australian Society of Anaesthetists will hear in Canberra this weekend, March 14-15.

The annual Art of Anaesthesia conference in Canberra, titled “Great expectations: but can we deliver” will hear about a range of topics including the increasing use of mobile ultrasound techniques in diagnosing a patient’s suitability for anaesthesia in an emergency, as well as the challenges posed for anaesthetists by the obese pregnant patient.

"Providing the ideal anaesthetic for the obese pregnant patient is a challenge where both the mother's and baby's safety is concerned, especially when it may be an emergency situation. Furthermore, pain relief during labour and after delivery can be difficult to deliver given changes in physiology and pharmacology with these patients," anaesthetist Dr David Wright will tell the meeting.

“As anaesthetists, we face the burden of obesity with increasing regularity.

“Those of us who work in centres catering for pregnant women will also be required to manage the potential complications of obesity and pregnancy.”

Melbourne-based anaesthetist Dr David Canty will also tell the meeting that Australian anaesthetists are leading the world in the use of small, portable ultrasound devices.

Dr Canty will explain where the fast, accurate and non-invasive technique can – and has – changed the nature of a patient’s anaesthetic and treatment by delivering an immediate picture of the patient’s complication.

“We can see exactly what is happening in a patient’s heart immediately.

“This is a technique that should be now be taught in medical schools.”

• For more information or to request interviews, please contact ANZCA Media Manager Ebru Yaman on +61 3 8517 5303, +61 408 259 369 or eyaman@anzca.edu.au. Follow us on Twitter @ANZCA.