

Anaesthetists outline dire situation overseas Monday May 3, 2010

Half of Papua New Guinea's population is under 16 and 10% of children do not live to the age of five, the Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists in Christchurch will be told today (Monday, May 3).

In his paper "Paediatric anaesthesia in Papua New Guinea", Dr Michael Cooper from Sydney's Westmead Hospital says paediatric anaesthesia and surgery were poorly resourced in PNG.

There are just two paediatric surgeons and of the eleven anaesthetists, none have done any specific higher paediatric training. Anaesthetic equipment is outdated and the drugs basic and many are in short supply.

Dr Cooper is one of four speakers talking today (a half-day program) about their overseas work. Others talks include include "Building self-sufficiency in the Pacific – a surgical perspective", "A doctor without borders in Sri Lanka" (Dr Don Pereira) and "After the tsunami in Samoa" (Dr Alan Goodey, Hamilton)

The Gilbert Brown Prize session for the best paper that relates to trainees formal projects is also on today, day three of the five-day meeting.

Today's sessions are on in the morning only. Tomorrow's sessions include:

- "Why bad things happen to good people".
- "Extreme physiology: How much can the body take".
- "Pushing boundaries in simulation".
- "Outcomes in anaesthesia".

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The program and abstracts from today's sessions can be found at www.anzca.edu.au