

## **Medical story of Trishna and Krishna a highlight of day two Sunday May 2, 2010**

The amazing story of the separation of conjoined twins Trishna and Krishna in Melbourne five months ago made headlines around the world. It is one of the highlights **today (Sunday May 2)**, day two of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists' Annual Scientific Meeting at the Christchurch's Town Hall and Convention Centre.

The man who led the team of anaesthetists, **Dr Ian McKenzie**, will outline how the multidisciplinary team solved a whole array of problems. The shared circulation created serious medical problems with Krishna arriving at death's door at 11 months of age.

Technical anaesthesia issues included problems such as positioning the twins during the procedure and for intubation, dealing with the fact that when one twin received an anaesthesia drug, both twins were anaesthetised, and managing the conflicting cardiovascular consequences of the cross-circulation, with one twin suffering high blood pressure, the other low blood pressure.

Also on the program:

- Why is it easier to get doctors to the top of Mount Everest than it is to change their clinical practice? This is the question **Professor Michael "Monty" Mythen**, will put to the audience in his keynote address. Professor Mythen took part (with his family) in "Caldwell Xtreme Everest", an expedition conducting research into hypoxia, altitude sickness and human performance at extreme altitudes.
  - *Please note: Professor Mythen could not travel to New Zealand due to health reasons and his talk will be delivered via video.*
- Being able to manage post-surgery pain at home using a portable infusion pump allows patients to have the same level of anaesthesia as those still in hospital. Iowa pain specialist **Professor Richard Rosenquist** highlights the positives but also warns of the negatives, such as local anaesthetic overdose, complications that take longer to be recognised and catheter dislodgement.
- The session "On the shoulders of giants" is aimed at showing just how far anaesthesia has come over the years and admiring the work of forbears who managed with such limited equipment. They include:
  - A virtual neuroanaesthetic circa 1910, the era of renowned neurosurgeon Harvey Cushion (**Professor Kate Leslie**, Melbourne)
  - A virtual trauma anaesthetic circa 1941, the year of the Pearl Harbour attack (**Professor Steve Shafer**, New York, USA)

- A virtual cardiac anaesthetic circa 1967, when Christian Barnard performed the first heart transplant (**Dr David Sidebotham**, Auckland)
  
- Pain is one of the biggest health issues today – every bit as big as cancer, AIDS and coronary disease, says world-renowned pain medicine specialist Professor Michael Cousins from Sydney. Chronic pain affects one in five people yet it is poorly managed in most countries around the world. Australia is taking a leading role in having pain recognised for the debilitating and costly condition that it is. A National Pain Strategy calls for many changes in how pain is managed including spreading the message that a wider range of help – beyond painkillers – is available.

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**The program and abstracts from today's sessions can be found at [www.anzca.edu.au](http://www.anzca.edu.au)**