



Centre of Excellence Programme for Robotic Surgery to be Launched



Surgical Review Corporation (SRC) and the Clinical Robotic Surgery Association (CRSA) have announced the joint development of a global Center of Excellence in Robot-Assisted Laparoscopic Surgery (COERALS) programme. Consistent with the quality and safety ideals held by both organisations, this designation programme will identify, cultivate, support and recognise minimally invasive robotic surgery surgeons and facilities that achieve defined standards for excellence in general surgery and related specialties: upper gastrointestinal, hepatopancreatobiliary, thoracic, colorectal, vascular, transplant, otolaryngology, endocrine, oncology and bariatric.

CRSA and SRC will develop the set of standards and criteria for evaluating providers performing robotic surgery, and SRC will independently manage all operational aspects of the programme. A vital component of COERALS will be a comprehensive surgical outcomes database and patient registry that will provide clinical data and support research efforts to improve patient safety, care and surgical outcomes. The database will be developed by SRC and powered by its proprietary BOLD™ application framework. BOLD is the largest global database for bariatric surgery with more than 500,000 patient records, and will support outcomes data collection for AAGL's Center of Excellence in Minimally Invasive Gynecology programme.

"COERALS is much more than a certificate programme. We are establishing clinical quality and patient safety standards for robotic surgery and driving continuous improvement through outcomes data," said Neil Hutcher, MD, Chief Medical Officer and Vice President of SRC. "Achieving designation is an ongoing process of meeting and maintaining programme requirements, continued learning and regular review. SRC is proud of CRSA's commitment to excellence and honored to partner with them on this endeavor."

The COERALS programme will provide two distinct and flexible designation types. A "surgeon-only" option – the Surgeon of Excellence in Robot-Assisted Laparoscopic Surgery (SOERALS) designation – will be for surgeons interested in applying solely through their private practice or without a specific hospital. This option also benefits surgeons operating in multiple hospitals. A "facility + surgeon" option will designate the hospital-based robotic surgery programme and individual surgeons together. Dual designations are offered for those surgeons who want to participate in both programmes. SRC programme managers will assist providers in selecting the most appropriate designation types.

"We are committed to building a treatment standard and clinical pathway structure from which all hospitals and surgeons can learn and follow as they achieve designation at their own pace and within their own resources,"

said Pier Cristoforo Giulianotti, MD, Past-President of CRSA and Chief of the University of Illinois Medical Center's Division of General, Minimally Invasive and Robotic Surgery. "This approach allows all robot-assisted surgery programmes to benefit from COERALS whether or not they choose to seek designation. The COERALS programme will seamlessly align with CRSA's aim to provide clinical, educational and innovative services in a manner that will support the true mission of facilitating robotic techniques in general surgery and related specialties."

The COERALS designation programme will launch in July 2013, with development of a robotic surgery outcomes database to follow in the autumn.

For more information, please visit: www.surgicalreview.org and www.clinicalrobotics.com

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