

Netcare Pretoria East Hospital

Media Release

Colorectal cancer laparoscopic workshop updates SA surgeons on latest approaches

Cutting edge minimally invasive procedures to treat cancer demonstrated

Thursday, 15 August 2019, Well-known Pretoria laparoscopic surgeon, Dr Michael Heyns, recently hosted an educational workshop at Netcare Pretoria East Hospital to share the latest minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery techniques and approaches in the treatment of colorectal cancer with colleagues from the public and private sectors.

“As a result of the advantages offered by minimally invasive surgery over traditional full-incision surgery, laparoscopic or ‘keyhole’ procedures are increasingly becoming the preferred approach internationally in the excision and treatment of a range of colorectal cancers,” says Dr Heyns, who has extensively trained in this area both locally and abroad.

Dr Erich Bock, director of Netcare’s North East region, adds, “With new approaches and technologies being introduced all the time, Dr Heyns — who brings vast experience to, and is at the forefront of this field of medicine in South Africa — regularly hosts these educational workshops to the benefit of his colleagues and the profession.”

Dr Bock says colorectal cancer has been identified as the fourth most common cancer to occur in both men and women in South Africa, and the sixth most deadly.¹ This highlights the importance of medical practitioners staying abreast of the latest advances in treatment and the key role that workshops such as this play in achieving the best possible clinical outcomes for patients.

“Netcare and Netcare Pretoria East Hospital are most grateful to Dr Heyns, not only for his willingness to share his considerable knowledge and expertise with other medical practitioners at these accredited CPD [Continuing Professional Development] events, but also for the valuable contribution he is making to the progression of healthcare in our country.”

Dr Bock says more than 50 surgeons and interventional specialists from around South Africa attended this year’s highly successful colorectal workshop at Netcare Pretoria East Hospital. The workshop involved three live procedures to demonstrate the latest approaches, and also provided those attending with the opportunity to participate and share their knowledge in interactive discussions.

Dr Tim Forgan of Stellenbosch University and Tygerberg Academic Hospital, a highly experienced surgeon who has a special interest in minimally invasive colorectal surgery, moderated the workshop.

Dr Heyns started proceedings by providing an overview of current trends within the field of colorectal surgery. He then went on to demonstrate the transanal total mesorectal excision (TaTME) procedure, an endoscopic procedure in which part of the rectum is excised laparoscopically in order to treat rectal cancer, and a laparoscopic abdominoperineal (AP) resection to treat cancer that occurs low in the rectum or in the anus.

Dr Heyns also demonstrated a laparoscopic right hemicolectomy, which is the removal of the right side of the colon to treat cancer, and the re-attachment of the small intestine to the remaining section of the colon.

Commenting on the event, Dr Heyns said that he had received much positive feedback from the workshop participants and thought that it had been exceptionally well received. He thanked Dr Forgan for acting as moderator, and all of the medical professionals who had participated in the event for sharing their knowledge so freely and enthusiastically with their colleagues.

“It is always a great privilege to be able to confer and share ideas and experiences with colleagues as it assists in enhancing this field of medicine in South Africa, which continues to grow in importance both locally and globally,” he added.

Rolien Kuhne, general manager of Netcare Pretoria East Hospital, says that while Dr Heyns has a special interest in laparoscopic colorectal surgery, he is also a highly experienced general surgeon who performs a range of procedures including endocrine and hernia repair surgeries to treat breast, bladder and other cancers.

“Dr Heyns is a highly experienced and capable lead surgeon at our facility, where he has assisted many of our patients through his highly innovative and groundbreaking procedures over the years,” adds Kuhne.

“His expertise in minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery techniques and approaches is particularly impressive and his contribution to this area of medicine has been internationally acknowledged. We are most fortunate to have a surgeon of his calibre practising at Netcare Pretoria East Hospital and in this country to help us stay abreast of the latest advances,” concludes Kuhne.

Ends

Reference

1. *South African Medical Journal* 2018;108(2):118-122. DOI:[10.7196/SAMJ.2018.v108i2.12338](https://doi.org/10.7196/SAMJ.2018.v108i2.12338)

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