



EuroSurg: Across Europe a new novel student-driven research group in surgery

Bahar Büşra Özkan¹, Gökhan Selçuk Özbalcı², Aziz İhsan Tavuz³, Zeynep Şifa Demirci⁴, Bahadır Emre Baki⁵, Ozan Can Tatar⁶

Dear Editor,

In 2013, a student-oriented working group called STARSurg (The Student Audit and Research in Surgery) directed to medical students and surgical residents was founded in the UK. STARSurg is a group offering students the opportunity to participate in high-quality studies and encouraging them to be clinicians engaged in active research in the future (1). The first study of STARSurg was joined by more than 250 students from 109 hospitals. This study was related to the post-operative impacts of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs in patients undergoing major gastrointestinal tract surgery, and was performed prospectively on 1500 patients. All participants were co-authors in the publication on completion of the study (2). STARSurg have been established in all schools in England and Ireland, and now includes more than 180 hospitals. All manuscripts of STARSurg projects can be accessed through PubMed and can be used as references. Everyone involved in studies is included in these publications.

In some countries, students do not have the opportunity to participate in surgical research. It is expected that students would benefit from such type of working groups by actively participating in projects in collaboration with students from various countries, and that their research related abilities would improve.

Students were invited to the ESCP (European Society of Coloproctology) Congress in Dublin in September 2015, to hold a meeting aiming to develop an international research network.

The student-oriented research model developed by STARSurg was discussed, and it was decided to conduct a cohort study focused on international students at the beginning of 2016. The students, guided by experienced surgeons in this debate, chose to investigate the relationship between obesity and complications following major gastrointestinal surgery. This study was based on the Determining Surgical Complications in the Overweight (DISCOVER) study that was successfully held in the UK and Ireland by STARSurg (3).

During this session in Dublin, students decided to work in partnership and to establish a working group they called EuroSurg. This group has active members in Ireland, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Netherlands and United Kingdom, and these countries also have a national management committee of their own. Students from each participating country focused on publishing their results in the ESCP Congress in 2016, while developing the international cohort study protocol. This initiative is supported by STARSurg, ESCP, Società Italiana di Chirurgie Colo-Rettal and many experienced surgeons.

The letters sent by EuroSurg working group was published online in the Colorectal Disease (4). This article stated that EuroSurg is conducted by students and residents, that it is supported by ESCP, as well as listing the countries participating in EuroSurg.

In Turkey, most medical students and surgical residents are not involved in formal research education and their participation to studies is limited. An official network supporting, controlling, and improving residents and students' research skills should be established. More than 120 students from 20 Medical Faculty from Turkey has been included in this study.

STARSurg decided to benefit from social media to be in constant contact with participants (5). EuroSurg was able to recruit many participants from more than 60 universities in Europe by using this method since December 2015.

¹Ondokuz Mayıs University School of Medicine, Samsun, Turkey

²Department of General Surgery, Ondokuz Mayıs University School of Medicine, Samsun, Turkey

³Istanbul Medipol University School of Medicine, Istanbul, Turkey

⁴Gazi University School of Medicine, Ankara, Turkey

⁵Karadeniz Technical University School of Medicine, Trabzon, Turkey

⁶Kocaeli University School of Medicine, Kocaeli, Turkey

Address for Correspondence

Bahar Büşra Özkan

e-mail:

bbaharozkan@yahoo.com.tr

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We invite all interested students, residents and surgeons to register to our website to take part in the unique opportunity of the EuroSurg working group (www.eurosurg.org) (6).

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