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FACTSHEET

SUcceSS: SUrgery for Spinal Stenosis – September 2024

The George Institute for Global Health

FACTS:

- Decompression surgery is the most common reason for spinal surgery in adults over the age of 65.
- Between 2003 and 2013, decompression surgeries in NSW, Australia increased by 13%, a trend also seen internationally, despite a lack of strong evidence supporting its effectiveness.

PROJECT CYCLE:

2019–2027

PARTNERS:

The George Institute for Global Health, Australia
The University of Sydney, Australia
Monash University, Australia
Austin Hospital, Australia
Cabrini Research, Australia
Concord Repatriation General Hospital, Australia
Liverpool Hospital, Australia
Mater Hospital, Australia
Prince of Wales Hospital, Australia
Prince of Wales Private Hospital, Australia
Sydney Adventist Hospital, Australia
Sydney Southwest Private Hospital, Australia
The Wollongong Hospital, Australia
Wollongong Private Hospital, Australia

SUPPORTERS:

National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia

Medibank Private Research Foundation, Australia

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

Professor Manuela Ferreira

BACKGROUND:

- Symptomatic lumbar spinal stenosis (LSS) is a debilitating condition, attributed to narrowing of the spinal canal. Patients will often experience pain, numbness or weakness in the legs, which is worse when standing/walking and alleviated by sitting/bending forward.
- Decompression surgery is a commonly used procedure in these cases and involves removal of bone and ligament which contribute to the canal narrowing. However, not all people improve following decompression surgery, and some improve without decompression surgery.
- There is a lack of high-quality evidence demonstrating the efficacy of decompression surgery for people with LSS

AIM:

- To determine whether decompression surgery is clinically effective, cost-effective, and safe for people with LSS, when compared to placebo surgery.

METHODS:

- SUcceSS is a placebo-controlled randomised trial of decompression surgery for people with LSS.
- Participants will be randomised in the operating theatre to either decompression surgery or placebo surgery (decompression surgery without bone or ligament removal).
- Outcomes include pain, function, impact on daily living activities, quality of life, walking capacity, and healthcare usage collected every three months for two years.

IMPACT

- The SUcceSS study will provide the first high-quality evidence of the efficacy of decompression surgery for LSS.
- If the study shows that decompression is both effective and safe, the results will directly influence practice by providing strong evidence to support its use.

CONTACT:

To find out more about this project, its investigators or The George Institute please contact
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