



American
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Surgeon Volume Impacts Cost of Care in Pituitary Surgery

A presentation at the 2015 American Association of Neurological Surgeons Annual Scientific Meeting

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 5, 2015) — Winner of the Integra Foundation Award, Charles Lee, a student at the University of Rochester, studied the relationship between how many pituitary surgeries a neurosurgeon does and the overall cost of care for patients for patients in New York State.

Using a database that tracks all surgeries done in New York State, the authors completed a surgeon volume-cost analysis on pituitary tumor surgery from 2008 to 2011. All patients underwent elective pituitary tumor surgery and were discharged to home or self-care. Surgeons who performed less than 20 cases per year were compared to surgeons who performed 20 or more cases per year on hospital charges, costs, cost-to-charge ratios and length of stay (LOS) — important cost and quality parameters.

For the 1,803 transsphenoidal pituitary tumor surgeries studied, the average patient was in their 50s, with a nearly even split between men and women. The median hospital charge was almost \$20,000 higher and the median hospital cost was more than \$5,000 higher for lower-volume surgeons.

The cost-to-charge ratio (a measure of charge inflation) pointed to higher inflation for lower-volume surgeons. Median LOS for lower-volume surgeons was also longer. Shorter length of stay is a “proxy” for care quality, and this suggests that patients treated by lower volume surgeons required at least one extra day in the hospital to recover.

As the study demonstrates, experienced pituitary neurosurgeons demonstrated decreased hospital charges, costs and length of stay in New York State. The data suggests that patients with pituitary tumors (a highly portable disease) should be considered for referral to high-volume surgeons to promote high-value, effective care.

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Media Representatives: The 2015 AANS Annual Scientific Meeting press kit includes releases on highlighted scientific research, AANS officers and award winners, Neurosurgery Awareness Week and other relevant information about this year’s program. Those releases will also be posted under the “Media” area on the 2015 AANS Annual Scientific Meeting [website](#). If you have interest in a topic related to neurosurgery or would like to interview a neurosurgeon — either onsite or via telephone — during this year’s event, please contact Alice Kelsey, AANS director of marketing and communications, via email at aik@aans.org.

About the 2015 AANS Annual Scientific Meeting: Attended by neurosurgeons, neurosurgical residents, medical students, neuroscience nurses, clinical specialists, physician assistants, allied health professionals and other medical professionals, the AANS Annual Scientific Meeting is the largest gathering of neurosurgeons in the nation, with an emphasis on the field’s latest research and technological advances. More than 1,200 scientific abstracts were presented for review at the 2015 AANS Annual Scientific Meeting, and the scientific presentations given at this year’s event represent cutting-edge examples of the incredible developments taking place within the field of neurosurgery. Additional information about the 2015 AANS Annual Scientific Meeting and the meeting program can be found [here](#).

Founded in 1931 as the Harvey Cushing Society, the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS) is a scientific and educational association with more than 9,000 members worldwide. The AANS is dedicated to advancing the specialty of neurological surgery in order to provide the highest quality of neurosurgical care to the public. Fellows of the AANS are board-certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery, the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, or the Mexican Council of Neurological Surgery, A.C. Neurosurgery is the medical specialty concerned with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of disorders that affect the spinal column, spinal cord, brain, nervous system and peripheral nerves.

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