



# BIARGS

## British & Irish Association of Robotic Gynaecological Surgeons

### President's Editorial

*Developments since the inauguration of the Association in 2010*

### BIARGS Conference 2015



Robotics in Gynaecological Surgery - BIARGS 2015 5th - 6th November

Since we had our inaugural meeting at the RCOG in 2010 the Association has now held 4 further annual meetings in Cork, Manchester, London with the most recent held at Wolverhampton race course in Nov of last year. Our

meeting this year will take place at The Wirral on 5-6 Nov. The meetings have all had about 100 robotic enthusiasts sharing their ideas, experiences and the latest developments in our field.

### BIARGS membership now gives you SERGS membership

Our membership is growing slowly but steadily as the number of systems in the UK gradually increases. New systems have recently come online in Newcastle, The Wirral, Sheffield and Leicester.

From the membership perspective we have now become a subsidiary national organization to the

Society of European Robotic Gynaecological Surgeons ([www.SERGS.org](http://www.SERGS.org)). Therefore by joining BIARGS each member is automatically a member of SERGS and is entitled to the benefits of both organisations including meeting discounts and access to educational material on the SERGS website. This is the most cost effective way to participate in the UK and European gynae robotic community.

### 2015

#### Headlines



New BIARGS Membership deal giving membership to both BIARGS and SERGS simultaneously

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NHS England turns its attention to commissioning of robotic surgery

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The new da Vinci Xi robot allowing four quadrant abdominal surgery

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#### Reports



Alaa El-Ghobashy reports on his BIARGS meeting at Wolverhampton race course in November 2014

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## Future Challenges for Gynaecological Robotics in the UK

Thomas Ind has been re-establishing our links with the RCOG that became a little blurred in the last 18 months to ensure that we have a voice on robotic matters in College circles.

This is particularly important as NHS England is beginning to turn its attention to commissioning for robotics in the NHS. Their urology clinical commissioning policy is already complete and only gave financial reimbursements for prostate Ca and not the other urological procedures.

So far in gynaecology we have no reimbursements for consumables or specific HRG codes for robotic procedures. I

have logged BIARGS as a stakeholder in the consultation process that will begin with the specialized gynaecology Clinical Reference Group making an assessment of robotics for radical and standard hysterectomy. This Group is Chaired by Sarah Creighton at UCH with regional members. The process has not yet begun but we need to be on top of developments and be proactive to be able to fight our corner at the appropriate time.

This is likely to be our only opportunity to get centralized funding for robotics and the current information coming out of NHS England is rather negative about robotics.



*The new da Vinci Xi*

*Likely to make oncological procedures involving para-aortic dissections and access to areas of the abdomen outside of the pelvis much easier*

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## Report from the Wolverhampton Meeting – Alaa El-Ghobashy



On the 6th and 7th of November 2014 BIARGS held its Annual Meeting at the Science Park Conference Centre, Wolverhampton, West Midlands. More than 100 delegates, speakers and exhibitors were in attendance.

The meeting opened with a Presidential Address by Mr Matt Hewitt (Cork). The first plenary session covered the topic of 'Robotic technology and the NHS' with David Loughton (Wolverhampton), Raj Naik (Newcastle) and Tom Ind (London). The morning session finished with an excellent lecture delivered by Rebecca Randall (Leeds) on "Integrating robotic surgery into routine practice".

The after lunch parallel session (1) highlighted robotic surgery evolution in three Centres; Wirral, Sheffield and Guilford. The first day was concluded with update sessions from national and international experts covering topics such as para-aortic LNs dissection (Jan Persson), management of severe endometriosis (Peter Barton-Smith) and evidence based robotic radical hysterectomy (Alaa El-Ghobashy).

A lively and involving social event brought together surgeons and nurses in a cordial atmosphere. The horse racing and subsequent dinner at the spectacular Wolverhampton Racecourse was one of the highlights of the conference. The audience was also entertained by an eloquent speech by Professor John Shepherd.

Day two began with a plenary session on some interesting topics on Robotic Gynaecological Surgery. Rainer Kimmig (Essen, Germany) updated everyone about the compartmental theory in pelvic cancer. Angus McIndoe (London) demonstrated the state of art single port robotic hysterectomy with video presentation. Moreover, Athula Ratnayake (Wolverhampton) gave his views on challenges facing anaesthetists caring for patients undergoing robotic operations. Four high quality presentations competing for a single oral prize were given in the proffered session (2) and were judged by Helen Sullivan (Wolverhampton) and Saikat Banerjee (Chertsey).

Professor Jan Persson (Lund, Sweden) had been invited to give this year's keynote lecture "Lessons learned from 9 years with robotic assisted laparoscopy". The session was universally attended by both clinicians and nurses.

The conference was concluded with three different debates on robotic versus laparoscopic treatment of endometriosis, radical hysterectomy for cervical cancer and uterovaginal prolapse repair.

An important highlight of the meeting was the significant attendance of nursing and allied staff. Nurses' sessions took place in day 2 of the conference and were conducted at the Stephenson

Suite. Contributions were made from different centres across the UK and Europe.

The best oral presentation was awarded to Dr K Lathouras (Frimley Park Hospital). Two presentations were allocated the best poster awards including one displayed by Dr T Tembo (Singapore General Hospital) and one by J Williams and S Ark (The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust). Each received a small cash prize (£ 100). BIARGS would like to congratulate them on their achievements and thank them for choosing to present their work at the meeting.

At the AGM Matt Hewitt stood down as President and Peter Barton-smith took over with Thomas Ind as Vice President. Thank you to Matt for his calm stewardship over the last two years. Alaa El-Ghobashy, Alan Gillespie and Marielle Nobenhuis joined the Council as Members.



## BIARGS & SERGS Meetings 2015 -

SERGS 2015 will take place from 11-13 June at the Grand Wyndham Hotel in Istanbul. For further details go to [www.sergs2015.org](http://www.sergs2015.org)



BIARGS 2015 will take place at The Wirral from 5-6 Nov.

### BIARGS Conference 2015



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[www.biargs.org.uk](http://www.biargs.org.uk)