



UROLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

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New Zealand women without options after NZ Government ban on all mesh products

The Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand condemns the decision by the New Zealand Minister of Health to ban all mesh for urinary incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse.

Local USANZ spokesman, Dr Giovanni Losco a urologist in Christchurch, says, “the Australian TGA (Therapeutic Goods Administration) decision to ban transvaginal mesh for pelvic organ prolapse is accepted by the urological community in Australia and New Zealand, but our Minister’s decision to ban all forms of mesh for incontinence as well as prolapse in women in New Zealand is more far-reaching than the Australian decision.

“This makes New Zealand the only country in the world to have banned all of these procedures and will leave women without effective surgical options for these debilitating conditions.”

New Zealand based USANZ Vice president, Dr Stephen Mark, says specialist training and experience in mesh surgery is the critical factor in ensuring good outcomes, rather than the mesh itself.

“We know many hundreds of thousands of women around the world have benefitted from these procedures, but importantly we also know that complications have typically occurred where the mesh has been implanted by surgeons without the appropriate sub-specialty training. We believe this to be the critical issue.

“The TGA conducted a review of available scientific evidence regarding mesh and came to the view that insufficient evidence regarding its safety and efficiency for prolapse necessitated its removal. However, this robust review also determined that the evidence supported TVT mesh for incontinence remaining an option for Australian women.

“So why has Medsafe taken this unreasonable decision to ban these products and leave New Zealand women without the same options available to other women worldwide?”

“Complications can occur in any type of surgery, and undoubtedly some women have been affected by complications relating to mesh surgery. However, as with all surgical procedures these complications can be minimised, and if necessary, corrected, if performed by a surgeon with the right type of training and experience and appropriate patient selection.

Urologists, particularly those with an interest in female urology, along with uro-gynaecologists are specialists in treating incontinence and pelvic organ prolapse.

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The Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand is the peak professional body for urological surgeons in Australia and New Zealand. Urologists are surgeons who treat men, women and children with problems involving the kidney, bladder, prostate and male reproductive organs. These conditions include cancer, stones, infection, incontinence, sexual dysfunction and pelvic floor problems.