

In 2009, the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery started recruiting subjects into four international multicentre randomised controlled orthopaedic studies. During 2010, the department began to emerge as an international player in clinical orthopaedic research in collaboration with the number one group at McMaster University in Canada.

Key achievements in 2010 included:

- Associate Professor Liew was invited onto the Executive Committee of the International Hip Fracture Research Collaborative and the steering committees of two international randomised controlled trials. She featured in the Australian Orthopaedic Association Annual Scientific meeting with five invited presentations, eight scientific papers and five poster presentations
- Dr Adam Dowrick, Research Fellow, was awarded an NHMRC Overseas Early Career Fellowship enabling him to work with the McMaster group for the next two years

## International Multicentre Trials

**FLOW (Fluid Lavage of Open Wounds):** this trial examines the effect of irrigation pressure and an additive to saline irrigant in the initial management of open fracture wounds on the reoperation rate within one year. The total number of patients required is 2,300 and as of January 2011, there have been over 652 patients recruited across 25 sites, with The Alfred being the lead recruiter and just having passed a milestone of recruiting its 100th patient. Associate Professor Liew is on the writing committee and the group has two publications in press. The first paper reports on the results of the pilot study and suggests a trend toward better outcomes with low pressure and soap irrigation. The second paper describes the methodology of the definitive trial now running. We were awarded a Monash Near Miss Grant to continue this study.

**FAITH (Fixation using Alternative Implants for the Treatment of Hip fractures):** this trial compares the reoperation rate within two years for the fixation of undisplaced neck of femur fractures using three screws versus a sliding hip screw. The total number of patients required is 1,500. As of February 2011, there have been 535 patients recruited across 60 sites, with The Alfred being one of best recruiters (19 patients) outside of the Netherlands.

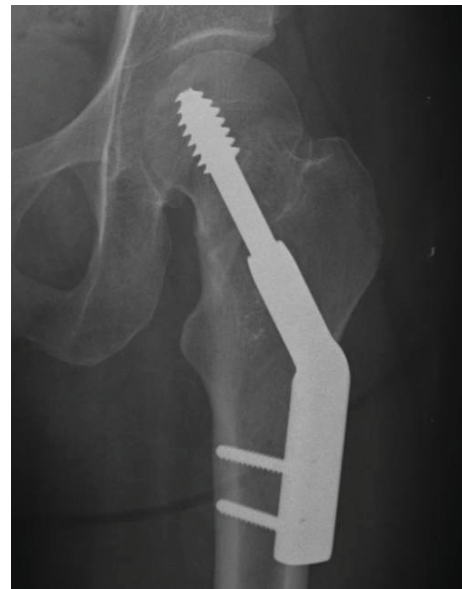
**HEALTH (Hip fracture Evaluation using the ALternatives of Total hip arthroplasty versus Hemiarthroplasty):** this trial compares the reoperation rate within two years for the treatment of displaced neck of femur fractures using a total hip arthroplasty (replacement) versus a hemiarthroplasty (partial hip replacement). The total number of patients required is 2,000. It is still in the pilot phase, with The Alfred (one of 30 hospitals) having already attained its 15 patient target.

**PRAISE (PRevalence of Abuse and Intimate partner Abuse Surgical Evaluation):** this trial examines the prevalence of domestic violence in female patients who attend an orthopaedic outpatient clinic. This observational study requires a total of 2,700 female patients. The initial pilot study of 282 females found 89 (32%) had been subject to emotional, physical, or sexual abuse by their partners. A methodology paper has been published.

**VOTOR (Victorian Orthopaedic Trauma Outcomes Registry):** this registry of major orthopaedic trauma patients was established at The Alfred in 2003 and now collects data from four Victorian hospitals, and so captures information on the majority of these patients across the state. It provides collaborative research opportunities for consultants and junior staff and resulted in a number of presentations at national trauma and orthopaedic conferences in 2010.

## Departmental Studies

Since the amalgamation of trauma and elective orthopaedics into one department in 2008, a working database of all patients treated has resulted in quarterly audits that provide a stimulus for questioning current clinical practices.



*Undisplaced femoral neck fractures are randomised to either a sliding hip screw and plate (left) or three cancellous screws (below) in the FAITH study.*



**Publications**  
2 Journal Articles