

CATARACT SURGERY: NEW CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS

With people living longer today, it is harder for ophthalmologists to meet the demand for cataract surgery, according to Dr Noel Alpíns from Como Private Hospital.

“Increased life expectancy is due to better health, improved food quality and enhanced lifestyles. At every decade, longevity is greater now than in the past, resulting in a greater population aged in their 70s and beyond,” said Dr Alpíns.

“This becomes proportionally greater year by year. You get many more people aged 80, 90 and even 100 years old. Anyone who gets to the age of 90 is going to have some degree of cataract, it’s inevitable,” he said.

As an ophthalmologist Dr Alpíns regularly performs surgery at Como Private Hospital to correct cataracts, the leading cause of reversible blindness and visual impairment worldwide.

“It’s overwhelming how the need for cataract surgery outpaces the ability to deliver what’s actually required for the community,” Dr Alpíns said.

In the past ten years, only 324 ophthalmologists graduated and went on to fellowships at The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists.

Dr Alpíns believes similarly low numbers will not be adequate to meet the growing need for cataract surgery in future.

“ Reducing the number of cataracts in the community is the most important goal, which should not be forgotten in the pursuit of new technologies ”

“Surgery will become inaccessible to many people because public system waiting lists will significantly increase and demand for ophthalmologists will be high, rendering care difficult to find in many areas,” said Dr Alpíns.

Dr Alpíns said increased surgical efficiency and accuracy will be vital to improving outcomes as the population ages.

However he cautioned that cost must be an integral consideration in the introduction of new technologies.

“Reducing the number of cataracts in the community is the most important goal, which should not be forgotten in the pursuit of new technologies,” said Dr Alpíns.

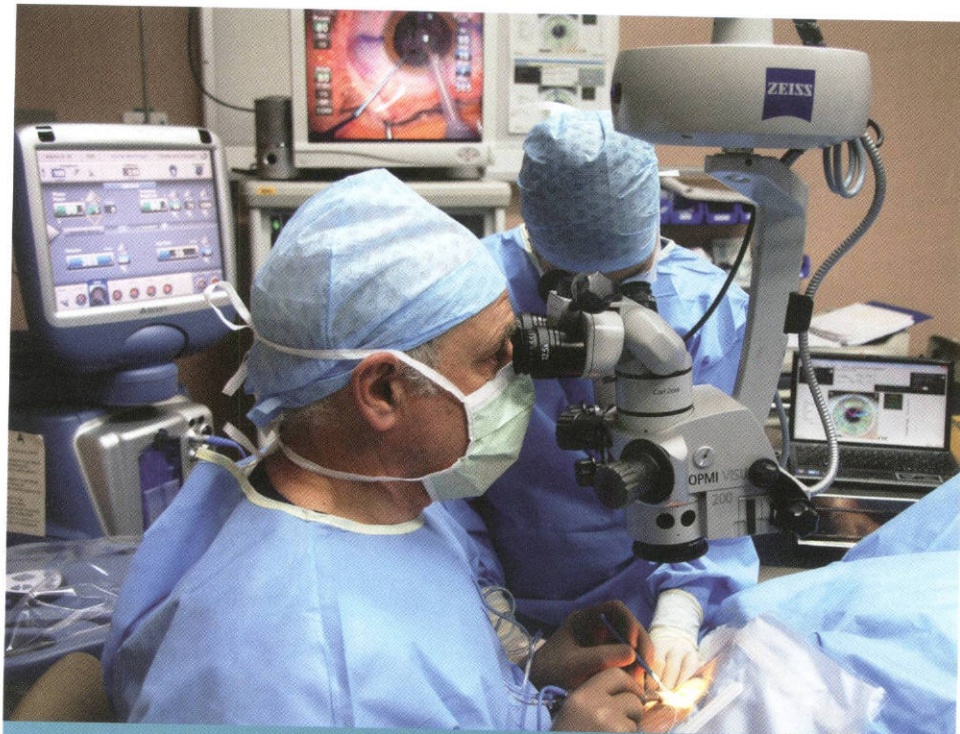
Dr Alpíns developed the ASSORT software program for planning and delivering strong outcomes of cataract and refractive surgery to optimise the correction of astigmatism, a form of blurred vision.

ASSORT is capable of analysing all measurable ophthalmic parameters, such as ocular tensions and medications and visual acuities. ASSORT displays numerically and graphically so pre- and post-operative surgical events may be clearly compared and documented.

“The program allows for planning and analysis of Toric IOL for astigmatism correction surgery, so that the ability to enhance outcomes is more easily managed and quantified,” said Dr Alpíns.

“It also has a limbal relaxing incision (LRI) calculator included allowing incisional surgery including femtosecond technology,” he said.

Dr Alpíns believes it is likely more ophthalmologists will offer femtosecond laser surgery in future, as the cost and additional time required for the procedure decreases.



Como Private Hospital Ophthalmologist Dr Noel Alpíns in surgery

“It is a very exciting time in ophthalmology with these cutting edge technologies becoming increasingly available for those who want modern innovations as an option in the surgical process,” said Dr Alpíns.

Dr Noel Alpíns Newvision Clinics,
phone 1800 20 20 20, email
alpíns@newvisionclinics.com.au,
www.newvisionclinics.com.au