Advantages of a same-day postoperative visit

Editor—I read with interest the article by Saal and colleagues1 on a postoperative visit and its impact on the patient satisfaction with anaesthesia care.

Postoperative visiting on the same day, when possible, may have other benefits in addition to increased patient satisfaction. First, any relevant pain issues may be picked up by an anaesthetist or a specialist nurse shortly after surgery, and dealt with appropriately. This may contribute towards successful implementation of an Enhanced Recovery after Surgery (ERAS) programme by giving an opportunity to optimize pain relief, thereby promoting early ambulation and possibly reducing surgical morbidity secondary to pain.

Secondly, when there is a positive feedback from the patient on the postoperative round, this could be relayed to the anaesthetist concerned. This will boost their morale and may motivate them to continue the good level of care and even improve the overall care.

Declaration of interest
None declared.

V. R. Patle*
Eastbourne, UK
‘E-mail: vidhipatle@yahoo.com

doi:10.1093/bja/aes013

Reply from the authors

Editor—We thank Dr Patle for his comments on our article.1 A postoperative visit on the same day certainly has the merits you describe. On the other hand, patients often are too sedated to recognize a visit as such. They may not be able to remember the visit or get an answer to the questions they may wish to pose a day later. It may be that the anaesthetist has to decide individually which aspect of the postoperative visit is more important for the patient or for him. I certainly agree with your second point about the value of a feedback for the attending anaesthetist or the anaesthesia team.

Declaration of interest
None declared.

D. Saal*
T. Heidegger
M. Nuebling
R. Germann
Feldkirch, Austria
‘E-mail: detlef.saal@lkhf.at

doi:10.1093/bja/aes014