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Spy glass technology at Liverpool Hospital

Liverpool Hospital has expanded its state-of-the-art Endoscopy Suite with the addition of a third procedure room and featuring the new Spy Glass digital technology, making it one of the largest and busiest stand alone endoscopy centres in NSW.

Endoscopy Director Dr David Abi-Hanna said Liverpool was one of only three hospitals in the state to perform the spy glass procedures which are used in complex cases, with doctors seeing patients not just from the District, but from across NSW.

“Spy glass allows us to view live images inside a patient’s bile duct without surgery to look closer and more accurately,” Dr Abi-Hanna said.

“Previously we had to use a dye contrast in the bile duct and take x-ray images to see what was happening inside. With the Spy Glass system we are able to get a more precise image which is very useful in diagnosing and treating serious and complex conditions.

“It allows us to distinguish between benign and malignant tumours and to directly take biopsies if needed from within the bile duct. It also allows us to use shockwave lithotripsy (sound waves) to shatter large stones in the bile duct so that they can be removed without surgery,” he said.

Dr David Abi-Hanna said as well as making it easier for staff to perform procedures, the addition of the new procedure room and upgrade of equipment ensured the service continued to meet the needs of the growing local community.

“The expansion has allowed for an increase of approximately 30 patients per week with a potential of seeing up to 200 patients a week,” Dr Abi-Hanna said.

The Endoscopy Suite was opened as a stand alone service in 2013 which meant patients undergoing endoscopic procedures could start and finish their journey in the one location.

Since it opened, more than 15,000 patients have been treated in the Endoscopy Suite.

Some of the procedures performed include removal of gallstones with no external cuts and the removal of large pre-cancerous tissue from the colon. Other procedures also include the placement of stents inside the digestive system for a range of blockages, usually related to the treatment of advanced cancer.