

7 bloodscape

KEYHOLE SURGERY

Laparoscopy – or keyhole surgery – is a relatively recent medical innovation that allows surgeons to operate using a much smaller incision than normal surgery. Surgeons wear goggles and use fibre optic cameras to see inside the patient.

Benefits of a smaller incision include: decreased risk of infection, shorter hospital stays, less pain, reduced scarring, and (of special interest) decreased need for blood transfusions. With a smaller incision, the patient bleeds less.

In the last decade, demand for blood in Scotland has fallen by more than 20% due to keyhole surgery, as well as improvements in transfusion and supply chains. Therefore, the Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) reduced the amount of blood collected overall to avoid wasting donated blood. SNBTS continually reviews the number of blood donor sessions to ensure enough blood is collected to meet hospital demand.

WANT TO TRY? The Surgeons' Hall Museums here in Edinburgh have a laparoscopy unit that you can try. Can you stack five red blocks?