Perspectives on Robots in the OR - A.J. Smith

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Will the OR of the future see robots completely replace human surgeons?

Robotic technologies combined with improved sensors and sophisticated intelligence will make inroads into many aspects of medical care, including surgical centers and operating rooms. With a proven ability to automate actions with outstanding repeatability and reliability, the opportunity exists for robots to move into non-critical and routine medical procedures.

Many surgical patients may not have confidence in complex medical procedures that are completely done by a robot. However, they may feel comfortable with the use of a robotic medical device that is being monitored and controlled by a trained medical technician who can ensure that the procedure is being completed according to best practices and is available to handle anything unexpected or any emergency that develops.

In the future, medical facilities may consist of a suite of medical procedure modules, with robotic instruments programmed to perform a set of routine tasks. Medical technicians would be on-hand to supervise the procedures, while trained surgeons would be responsible for overall management and quality control. By freeing highly paid surgeons to perform more of a high- level supervisory role, this could help control the rising costs of sophisticated medical care.

This is part 1 of 2 in this Perspectives series. Click here for Part 2. [1]

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