How do patients rate their experiences following regional anaesthesia – results from the AURORA study

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Aims
The Australian and New Zealand Registry of Regional Anaesthesia (AURORA) collects patient-rated outcomes (PROs) following peripheral nerve blockade (PNH).

Methods
We developed a questionnaire to collect PROs during the early post-operative period. Questions were structured from perioperative Leiden and McGill Pain Questionnaires (deemed valid and reliable). PROs also comprised domains previously reported by patients to our registry. The study period was July 2011 to April 2012.

Results
Due to word count constraints, data presented comprised results from three of 11 questions. Of 2002 patients, 1667 (66%) questionnaires were completed. In response to ‘How much were you satisfied about the explanation of the regional anaesthesia procedure’, 74% were satisfied/completely satisfied, 5% were dissatisfied/completely dissatisfied and 15% were unable to answer. In response to ‘How much did you after the operation experience pain’, 56% reported mild/none, 21% moderate, 10% severe and 13% were unable to answer. In response to ‘When the numbness/heaviness of the nerve block wore off, how much pain did you experience?’, 41% reported mild/none, 38% moderate, 25% severe and 16% were unable to answer. In response to ‘How much did your anaesthetist pay attention to complaints like pain and discomfort’, 70% were satisfied/completely satisfied, 3% were dissatisfied/completely dissatisfied and 24% were unable to answer.

Conclusions
Patients reported positively to explanation about the PNB procedure, although postoperatively, 24% of patients could not answer questions regarding their anaesthetists’ involvement. A notable proportion (43%) had significant pain during nerve block recession. Improvements regarding transitional analgesia or use of continuous catheter techniques may be necessary.