



## Military experience improved hospitals

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Military surgeons are set to teach lessons learned in field hospitals to help doctors in Canada deal with large-scale emergencies, one of the teachers said.

Dr. Vivian McAlister of the University of Western Ontario in London served two tours at the Canadian-run military hospital in Kandahar, Afghanistan. He is preparing the course to help civilian doctors deal with catastrophes such as a bus crash or school roof collapse.

The course is scheduled for September at the Canadian Surgery Forum in Victoria, British Columbia.

"Combat surgery has taught us to rapidly transport patients to hospital resuscitating them along the way, to expedite life and limb-saving surgery, but then to send patients to the intensive care until their normal physiological status returns before attempting to complete surgery," McAlister said in a statement. "More patients have been saved using these techniques known as 'damage control resuscitation' than if definitive surgery is done up front."

McAlister's article on the history of military surgery in Canada, and how the knowledge gained transfers to civilian hospitals, is scheduled to be published in the June issue of the Canadian Journal of Surgery.

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