STOP before you block

Notice for anaesthetists and anaesthetic assistants

- A STOP moment must take place immediately before inserting the block needle
- The anaesthetist and anaesthetic assistant must double-check:
  - the surgical site marking
  - the site and side of the block

“A joint advisory release by the Safe Anaesthesia Liaison Group (SALG) and Regional Anaesthesia UK (RAUK)

With thanks to Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
WHY the Campaign?

• 67 inadvertent wrong-sided nerve block reported via the NRLS over a 15-month period (SALG, Nov 2010)
• High level incident investigations in Nottingham (5 cases) found mistakes occurred despite WHO Checklist use

Aim to raise awareness of the problem & prevent further events
Factors Contributing to Wrong Sided Blocks

- Distraction in anaesthetic room
- Long time between WHO* and block
- Social activity of anaesthetic room
- Human error

*WHO = World Health Organisation Checklist “Sign in”
Times to be Vigilant

- Long duration of primary anaesthetic
  - Prolonged time since WHO “Sign in”
- After turning the patient
  - Block side “moved”
- Busy anaesthetic room
  - Excess distraction
- Lower limb nerve blocks
  - Surgical site arrow may not be immediately visible
STOP before you block

Notice for anaesthetists and anaesthetic assistants

- A STOP moment must take place immediately before inserting the block needle
- The anaesthetist and anaesthetic assistant must double-check:
  - the surgical site marking
  - the site and side of the block

• For unilateral blocks
• Simple double-check
• Separate from WHO checklist
• Immediately before insertion of needle for block
• Initiated by anyone (Anaesthetist / ODP / other theatre staff)
STOP Before You Block

- Poster copies will be downloadable from RCoA website
- Display the campaign poster in ALL areas where a nerve block is likely to be performed
- Please ensure local governance systems are in place to introduce this advisory message and audit uptake
- Engagement of ALL members of the anaesthetic team (anaesthetists, ODPs, etc) is essential for success of this safety initiative
Thank you for your help with the introduction of this initiative.