Low incidence of complications with Freka PEG tubes

We write in response to the article by Dowman *et al*¹ in *Frontline Gastroenterology* describing a high incidence of buried bumper syndrome (BBS) associated with Freka percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) tubes.

In a recent large prospective audit at Derriford Hospital, we found few buried bumpers using predominantly Freka tubes in our patients. Patients are attended by specialist enteral feeding community dieticians who train patients or their carers to provide high-standard nursing care.

We prospectively recorded morbidity and mortality related to gastrostomy placement over a 5-year period. Our data encompassed 350 patients with a total of 571 years of gastrostomy follow-up. More than 96% of the PEGs placed were Freka 15 F (Fresenius Kabi). Only five buried bumpers were detected during the study period giving an incidence of 1.4%. Two of these required removal and replacement (one surgically, one endoscopically); the remaining three remained in situ and either continued to be used or the patients had an additional PEG inserted or a jejunostomy inserted through the PEG to maintain patency. Median time to development of BBS was 808 days. PEG position, body habitus (high body mass index) and the training of attending staff were possible factors that we identified for the development of BBS in these patients.

In addition, it is clear anecdotally from patient feedback that Corflo tubes are unpopular, largely as they are stiffer and stick out further from the abdominal wall, and this seems a particularly significant concern among younger patients.

In summary, we demonstrated a low incidence of BBS with Fresenius tubes, and given this and patient preference as well as the clear cost saving as described by Dowman *et al*, we feel that Freka tubes are a

safe and effective option for the provision of enteral nutrition.

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Contributors SL led the audit. SL and EC were involved with analysing the data. EC wrote this response to the recently published article.

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- 1 Dowman JK, Ditchburn L, Chapman W, *et al*. Observed high incidence of buried bumper syndrome associated with Freka PEG tubes. *Frontline Gastroenterol* 2015;**6**:194–8.