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Title: Reduced perioperative mortality after centralization of lung cancer surgery

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Body: Background: Studies indicate that concentration into higher-volume centers improves survival after lung cancer surgery. Since 2008 all thoracic surgery in southern Norway (population 1.5 mill) has been centralized to one tertiary hospital. We have consecutively registered all lung cancer operations in our hospital (n=881) over the last 10 years. In this study we aim to compare survival in the first and last 5-years period, i.e before and after centralization. Results:

Table 1

	Period 2003-2007	Period 2008-2012
Age (mean, SD)	64 (10,9)	65 (9,9)
Male:female (n,%)	174 (57):133 (43)	293 (51):281 (41)
Pneumectomy (n,%)	67 (22)	51 (9)
30-days mortality (n,%)	10 (3,3)	4 (0,7)*

*p=0,004

Conclusions: The annual number of operations was nearly doubled as a result of centralization. Comparing the two 5-year periods before and after centralization, there was a significant reduction in perioperative mortality in the second period. The patients were comparable with respect to age and gender, and surgical procedures did not differ significantly. The results suggest that concentration of lung cancer surgery into a higher-volume center has improved early survival.