

Use of Surgical Facilities in District Hospitals to Expedite Patient Waiting Time for Breast Cancer Surgery; A Situation Report in Negeri Sembilan

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Introduction: The “Pink Ribbon Clinic” (PRC) in Hospital Tuanku Ja'afar Seremban was first inceptioned in the year 2018, being the brain child of Seremban based surgeons who set out to provide more systematic and accessible treatment to patients with breast cancer. The most significant hurdle faced in this initiative revolved around providing breast cancer surgery to a large volume of patients within the shortest duration of time. Other hurdles include overcoming social stigma among patients and family members, early disease detection and reducing the number of defaulters.

Presentation/Methods: The introduction of the “Cluster Hospital” concept enabled mobilization of equipment and the sharing of facilities and healthcare workers between lead and district hospitals. Breast cancer patients who sought treatment at Hospital Tuanku Ja'afar Seremban were afforded shorter waiting times as these patients were slotted in for surgery at Hospital Rembau, a district hospital 30 mins away. The operation theater at Hospital Rembau was otherwise previously unutilized. General surgeons and anaesthesiologists from Hospital Tuanku Ja'afar Seremban also aided with the training of medical officers at Hospital Rembau during their weekly visits. While there were strict selection criteria for patients who could be operated at Hospital Rembau, any potential post operative complications were promptly dealt with by transferring these patients back to the lead hospital. This ensured that patients could receive breast cancer surgery within one month from date of decision for surgery in accordance to the national Key Performance Index (KPI).

Conclusion: The use of operating facilities at district hospitals can greatly aid in overcoming the perennial issue of delayed breast cancer surgery due to high patient load. This also allows for the training of medical officers at district hospitals while also utilizing facilities at district hospitals which otherwise be redundant.

Keywords: Breast cancer, breast cancer surgery, lead hospital, district hospital.