

# **GLOBAL SURGERY IN PAHANG DARULMAKUMUR - A DIFFICULT CHALLENGE BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE. WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

O David\*, Jiffre D\*, Nor Azimi Y^

\* Consultant surgeons, Department of Surgery, Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan, Kuantan, Pahang, Malaysia

^ State Health Director, Pahang Darulmakmur, Malaysia.

Lancet Commission on Global Surgery was launched in 2013 to improve access to safe and affordable surgery and anaesthesia care. Surgery is an indivisible and indispensable part of healthcare. Pahang Darulmakmur is the largest state in Peninsular Malaysia and two-thirds is covered with dense forest. Also home to the largest number of native (Orang Asal) in Malaysia, where 40% lives at the fringe or within the jungles, access to surgical and anaesthesia care has always been a challenge.

## **Aim**

To review the evolution of surgical and anaesthetic services in Pahang and access to surgical services with regards to Global Surgery, for the year 2000-2023.

## **Method**

Records from 2000-2023 from all hospitals in Pahang were reviewed. Staffs who were working since 2000 were interviewed. Data collected were compared with the indicators of Global Surgery.

## **Results**

In 2000, there were only 8 operation theaters in Pahang, namely in Kuantan, Mentakab and Kuala Lipis. In 2022, this number has swelled to 37 operation theaters with new theaters in Hospital Raub(2002), addition of 8 theaters in Hospital Tengku Ampuan Afzan (2005), a new Hospital Sultan Haji Ahmad Shah with 15 operation rooms in Temerloh (2006), Hospital Kuala Lipis (2012), Hospital Pekan (2013), Hospital Rompin (2014), Hospital Bentong (2016) and Hospital Sultanah Hajjah Kalsom (2022). A total of 25329 procedures were performed in 2022.

When compared with Global Surgery blueprint, Pahang has achieved 80% 2 hour access.. However the surgeon-anaesthetic-obstetrician population ratio is still low although the number of surgical based specialists has increased from 25 in year 2000 to 131(2023). The surgical volume performed in 2022 is 1620/100000 population, still short of the desired 5000/100000 population.

## **Conclusion**

Pahang has gone a long way in Global Surgery since 2000, with marked progress in geographical access but there is still much to be done especially in terms of human resource and surgical volume, to have Global Surgery fully realized in the state of Pahang, by 2030.