

ESSENTIAL GENERAL SURGICAL SERVICES OF TAWAU CLUSTER HOSPITALS – ARE WE DOING ENOUGH?

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BACKGROUND

In alignment with the Lancet Commission on Global Surgery (LCoGS), the Department of General Surgery, Hospital Tawau, has been expanding our services to Hospital Kunak and Hospital Semporna since the year 2015. Once or twice a month, a team comprising of a surgeon, two medical officers and a house officer will conduct both clinic and operating theater (OT) in one day. Due to various aspects such as patient factors, the COVID-19 pandemic, limitation in resources and manpower, the services that is provided by the department is limited.

AIM/OBJECTIVES

To determine the current status of essential surgical services provided to Tawau cluster hospitals

To identify shortcomings of our current approach

To assess methods to improve services to achieve the targets of the core indicators set by LCoGS

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive analytical study using data collected from OT registry of Hospital Kunak and Hospital Semporna from January 2020 to December 2022. The trend of total number of surgeries done per month, including the nature and type of surgery is recorded and analyzed. Data obtained is compared with pre-existing literature on core indicators of LCoGS.

RESULTS

A total of 238 surgeries were done in both hospitals from January 2020 to December 2022, 22.3% of which are surgeon driven cases. Fluctuation is observed in the number of surgeries done per month in each OT - maximum of 23 and minimum of nil. 100% of cases in Hospital Kunak and 94.75% of cases in Hospital Semporna are elective surgeries. Breast surgeries, hernioplasty and excision biopsy of lumps make up 63.9% of total cases with 60.1% done under general or spinal anesthesia.

CONCLUSION

We are currently on the right track, but in order to achieve LCoGS targets by 2030, there is still much to be done. With adequate surgical and anesthetic care provider, it is possible to further improve our services and make full use of available facilities.