

Surgery by District Medical Officers: A Retrospective Audit on Open Appendicectomy and Patient Outcomes in Serian Hospital in 2021

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Aim: Appendicectomy is an Essential Surgical Procedure listed by Disease Control Priorities. This study aims to review the open appendicectomy performed by medical officers in Serian Hospital in 2021 and related patient outcomes.

Method: This is a single center descriptive retrospective audit. All triages, medical and operative records of 2021 were reviewed. All patients with the diagnoses of ‘possible/likely/to rule out acute appendicitis’ and ‘perforated appendicitis’ were included. Meanwhile, diagnoses like ‘acute abdomen’ and ‘needing abdominal reassessment’ were excluded. The data was collected for a one-year period from January to December 2021. Patients of age 12 to 64 years old were included.

Result: 49 patients were diagnosed with acute appendicitis in 2021. 20 necessitated immediate referrals to tertiary center due to sepsis, possible perforation and previous abdominal surgery. 1 patient transferred away for personal preference. All 29 patients who were selected for surgical intervention locally received surgery within 24 hours of presentation. Among whom, 4 patients required intraoperative referral to tertiary center due to challenging surgical field. Meanwhile, 25 other patients underwent successful open appendicectomy locally. The histopathological reports show that 72% had inflamed appendices, 24% were perforated, 4% was a negative appendicectomy. Postoperatively, 1 patient had surgical site infection, while another developed small bowel adhesion obstruction requiring bowel resection.

Conclusion: Medical officers in district center are capable of performing open appendicectomy. The provision of surgical training can further improve the delivery of surgical care in district centers. Suggested means of training include regular rotation of visiting surgical team from tertiary to district center, and organizing regular surgical education programs.