

Elective Surgery In a Pandemic – Is it Safe to Operate in a Designated COVID Hospital?

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Background

The global pandemic has resulted in mass cancellation of elective operations; impacting cancer procedures, waiting times and vital training opportunities. In the Southern trust, Craigavon Area Hospital is the designated 'COVID' site and Daisy Hill Hospital the 'Non-COVID' site.

Method

Prospective audit of the elective surgeries performed on COVID site between May-July and on non-COVID site from April-June 2020.

Data was collected from patient notes and electronic care record using a standardized audit proforma & included a 30 day follow up.

The measures introduced included;

- Full use of PPE
- Separate 'Clean' Ward & Staff
- Routine Patient & Staff Testing
- No Visiting Policy
- 7 Day Patient Self-Isolation Prior Surgery

Aim

To assess if systems introduced could potentiate low post-operative COVID cases in a COVID site in comparison to a non-COVID site.

Results

Number of Elective Operations



44 COVID Site



21 Non- COVID Site

Number of Post Operative COVID Cases



2.3% (1/44) developed clinical COVID 6 days post-operatively & did not require ICU



0% (0/21) developed COVID post-operatively

Number of Staff Cases of COVID



Zero COVID site

Zero Non- COVID site

Conclusion

The precautionary methods introduced may have contributed to the **low numbers** of post-operative COVID cases on the COVID site.



The methods were enough to enable elective **operations to recommence** on the COVID site, therefore, providing vital services for patients and allowing staff training opportunities to continue.



In light of the recent increase in COVID cases, a **re-audit** is being conducted using the same methods. This will increase the sample size and therefore significance of the results.

