

Abstract

Postponement of Elective Orthopedic Surgeries and Its Associated Factors in the Department of Orthopedics at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka

Background

Postponement of elective Orthopedics surgeries is a healthcare managerial problem causing decreased efficiency, Quality, and cost-effectiveness in care provision while increasing morbidity, mortality, and dissatisfaction among patients, families, and healthcare workers. Limited scientific data exists on this issue in Sri Lanka and the region.

Objectives

This study assessed the postponement rate, determined the associated factors, and explored the perceptions of health professionals on the elective Orthopedic Surgery postponement at the Department of Orthopedics at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka from the 5th of February to the 12th of March 2024.

Methods

An institutional-based descriptive-analytical cross-sectional study was conducted on 404 patients scheduled for Orthopedic Surgeries. A structured Interviewer Administered Questionnaire was utilized to gather patient data. The Data Extraction Sheet was designed to extract data from hospital documents. In-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with twelve healthcare professionals. Bivariate analysis was performed to explore associations, utilizing Pearson's Chi-square test and the unadjusted odds ratio to identify significant

relationships at $p < .05$ with a 95% confidence interval. Additionally, thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed three key themes.

Results

The elective Orthopedic surgery postponement rate was calculated at 23.5%. Less than 60 years of age, being Male, being unmarried, having a relative or friend in the health staff, Surgery scheduling in the morning session, availability of C-ARM machine were negatively associated factors while educated up to G.C.E O/L or less, household income less than 65,000 LKR, having Hypertension, having an acute infection and the major category of the surgery were positively associated with elective Orthopedic Surgery postponement. Operational challenges and resource management, Future preparedness planning and development of skills specific to Orthopedics, and Effects on patients and healthcare workers on postponements were the three identified themes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Nearly a quarter of elective Orthopedic surgeries were postponed. To minimize postponements, it is recommended to develop SOPs, optimize theater workflows, standardize patient Pre-Assessments, and optimize Orthopedic training based on identified associated factors and professional perceptions.

Key words: Postponement, Associated factors, Orthopedics, Elective Surgeries, Operation Theater, Perceptions