

SP4.1.13**Management of appendicitis during COVID-19 pandemic; short-term outcomes**

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Aims: COVID-19 pandemic has predisposed patients undergoing surgery to post-operative infection and resultant complications. Appendicitis is frequently managed by appendicectomy. After the onset of the pandemic, selected cases of appendicitis were managed with antibiotics which is a recognised treatment option. Our objective was to compare the management of appendicitis and post-operative outcomes between pre- and post-COVID-19.

Methods: Ninety-six patients were identified from before the onset of the pandemic (November 2019) to after the onset of the pandemic (May 2020). Data were collected retrospectively from electronic records including demographics, investigations, treatment, duration of inpatient stay, complications, readmissions and compared between pre- and post-COVID-19 groups.

Results: One hundred percent underwent surgical treatment before the onset of pandemic, compared with 56.3% from the onset of the pandemic. A greater percentage of patients were investigated with imaging post-COVID-19 (100% versus 60.9%; $p < 0.00001$). There was no significant difference in the outcomes between the two groups.

Conclusion: CT/MRI scan was preferred to laparoscopy in diagnosing appendicitis and conservative management of uncomplicated appendicitis was common practice after the onset of pandemic. Health boards can adapt their management of surgical conditions during pandemics without adverse short-term consequences. Long term follow-up of this cohort will identify patients suitable for conservative management.