

**1209 Effect Of COVID-19 On the Referral Base, Presentation, Treatment, And Immediate Outcome of Oral Cancer in An East Yorkshire Regional OMFS Head and Neck Unit. An Epidemiological Review Of 2019 vs 2020**

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**Introduction:** The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically altered health-care provision in primary and secondary care settings in the UK due to significant resources being prioritised for coronavirus care. Services have been affected at all levels of the referral ladder due to reductions and in some cases complete cancellation of face-to-face care. Throughout the pandemic the OMFS unit observed increasing numbers of patients with later stage oral malignant disease, therefore significantly more invasive surgical intervention, and reconstruction, associated with increased morbidity and mortality.

**Method:** This retrospective review collated data of all OMFS patients with oral squamous cell carcinomas requiring surgical intervention between the 23rd March and the 31st December 2019 compared with the same time period in 2020. Data collected included age, sex, time from referral to both 1st appointment and treatment, TNM staging, types of neck dissection and reconstruction, length of stay in hospital and any adjunctive treatment required.

**Results:** On comparison of the data sets, the 2020 cohort of patients had an overall later TNM staging result, with an increasing requirement for radical neck dissections and postoperative adjunctive treatment such as chemo/radiotherapy. The study found that on average, patients experienced a shorter waiting time from referral to initial assessment and commencement of treatment during the pandemic when compared to the previous year.

**Conclusions:** Overall, less patients were referred into hospital during period of the pandemic, however patients seen were diagnosed with significantly more advanced disease, this is likely attributed to reduced primary care services and delayed presentation.