India, conducted this retrospective cross-sectional study in 12 hospitals across the country. We compared the anaesthesia preferences during pandemic (April 2020) to a corresponding pre pandemic period (April 2019)

Results: A total of 636 out of 2,162 (29.4%) and 156 out of 927 (16.8%) surgeries were performed under GA in April 2019 and April 2020 respectively, leading to a fall of 13% in usage of GA. A 5% reduction in GA and a 12% increase in the usage of regional anaesthesia was observed for cesarean sections. There was no significant change in anesthesia for laparotomies and fracture surgeries. However, 14% increase in GA usage was observed in surgeries for local soft tissue infections and necrotic tissues.

Conclusion: Though overall usage of GA reduced marginally, the change was mainly contributed by anesthesia for caesarean births. The insignificant change in anaesthesia for other surgeries may be attributed to the lack of facilities for spinal anaesthesia and may reflect the risk taking behaviour of healthcare professionals in COVID-19 pandemic.

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Did COVID-19 Pandemic change Anaesthesia Practices in India: A Multi-centre Cross-sectional Study

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Introduction: The anaesthetic management for surgeries during the COVID-19 pandemic has posed unique challenges. Safety of all healthcare workers is an additional concern along with heightened risk to patients during General Anesthesia (GA). COVID-19 pneumonia and aerosol generation may be exacerbated during airway intervention and GA. We aimed to assess the change in the mode of anaesthesia due to the pandemic.

Methods: A research consortium led by WHO Collaboration Centre for Research in Surgical Care Delivery in Low and Middle Income countries,