

Surgery in Primary care: the future

Surgical services in Primary Care in the UK has come of age. To make it easy for the providers and purchasers of the service, three levels of surgical services have been categorised and are as follows:

Levels of service classification

The following classification of levels will help providers and purchasers of surgical in primary care (Dhumale 2007)

Level one – these services can be delivered by GPs with basic surgical skills from a basic minor op/treatment room:

- Sebaceous cysts
- Lipoma < 2cms
- IGTN – avulsion
- Excision of ‘small lumps and bumps’
- Chalazion
- Intra articular injection
- Cryotherapy
- Aspiration of cysts

And those mentioned in ‘The Red Book’ – statement of Fees and Allowances (SFA), regulations 24 of NHS (General Medical and Pharmaceutical Services) (HMSO 1990).

Level two – These services can be delivered by GPs/GPwSI/PSI with enhanced surgical experience (SHO/registrar) from a modified treatment room/operating theatre:

- Vasectomy
- Carpal tunnel decompression
- Ganglion on dorsum of wrist
- Zadek’s for IGTN
- Ligation of varicose veins
- Haemorrhoid injections
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy
- Gastroscopy
- Cystoscopy
- Caudal blocks

Level three – These services can be delivered by qualified and trained surgeons in a primary care setting from a fully functional operating theatre.

- Inguinal hernia repair
- Femoral hernia repair
- Epigastric hernia repair
- Umbilical hernia repair
- Excision of hydrocoele
- Large lipoma
- Circumcision
- Frenuloplasty of penis
- Redo CTD
- Eye lid procedure
- Colonoscopy
- Reversal of vasectomy
- High ligation and stripping of varicose veins

Other examples – Other examples of specialist procedures which could be delivered from a primary care setting:

- Ophthalmology: Phako emulsification for cataract, lid surgery

- Dermatology: Wide excision of melanoma, skin cancer
- Urology: Urodynamics
- Plastic surgery: Dupuytren's fasciectomy
- ENT: Laryngoscopy
- Gynaecology: Colposcopy, TVT
- Radiology: Diagnostic u/s, echocardiography
- Pain clinic

As technology progresses, one can envisage many more procedures being delivered in the community ranging from oncology to interventional cardiology. Robotic surgery in the community is a likely future scenario too.

Credit

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