

## Peer Review File

Article information: <https://dx.doi.org/10.21037/jphe-22-21>

### Reviewer A:

**Comment 1:** Selection process

**Reply 1:** Convenience sampling method was used for the pandemic group while simple randomised sampling of 50 patients were conducted in the prepandemic group. All patients were seen in breast surgery clinic.

Changes in text: line 127 to 130

**Comment 2:** Screening

**Reply 2:** 2% in prepandemic and 8% in pandemic were diagnosed through screening. This number is interesting despite the halt in screening programmes in public hospitals nationwide. However, screening for breast cancer was still performed in private hospitals. If these patient had not gone to the private sector for screening, they could have presented with a more advance disease later.

Changes in text: Line 191 to 195

**Comment 3:** Data analysis

**Reply 3:** Continuous variables were expressed as mean  $\pm$  standard deviation when the data was normally distributed, or in median with the interquartile range when the data was not normally distributed. Comparison of means was performed using the t test or Mann-Whitney test ( $P < 0.05$ ). Categorical variables were expressed in percentages and analysed using the Chi-square test or Fisher's Exact test ( $P < 0.05$ ), where applicable.

Change in text: Line 139 to 144

**Comment 4:** Breast cancer is the most common affliction among women in Malaysia.

**Reply 4:** sentence edited in text. Grammatical errors corrected.

Changes in Text: Line 204

**Reviewer B:**

**Comment 1:** Significance

**Reply 1:** Discussion made on statistically significant delays in diagnosis interval (prolong time from first clinic visit to diagnosis) during the pandemic. These were due to longer time taken pathology reporting and imaging by the radiology department due to restrictions caused by limitation in procedures and sanitisation.

Changes in text: Line 159 to 163

**Comment 2:** trace of edit

**Reply 2:** ammended

Changes in text: -

**Reviewer C:**

**Comment 1:** Duration of pandemic in Malaysia

**Reply 1:** Malaysia imposed movement control order (MCO) in various stages from March 2020. The pandemic has affected us in waves and activities were also affected differently in different stages even till this date. However, the initial most severe resrtictions were enforced in March 2020 for almost 6 months.

At the time of writing, the data were only collected for 4 months and aimed to be published soonest possible to show policy makers and readers the immediate impact of a pandemic and the need to improve work processes to prevent regression of breast cancer care.

**Comment 2:** Table 2 data on total patients in the pandemic group (Presentation Interval)

**Reply 2:** One patient from the pandemic group has unknown presentation interval. Therefore, this data is missing.

Changes in text: Line 155 to 157

**Comment 3:** Similar studies

**Reply 3:** compared with pakistan's paper and ammended in text

Changes in text line: Line 260 to 267