

## AB093. SOH21AS240. 'Out of hours' orthopaedics—the experience in a regional Irish trauma unit

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**Background:** Tullamore Hospital is the regional trauma service for the Midlands, providing 24/7 orthopaedic cover. 'Out of Hours' surgery is reserved for those occasions where waiting for the next operating list during normal working hours would result in an unacceptable outcome for the patient.

**Methods:** We performed a retrospective analysis of all operations performed in the emergency orthopaedic theatre between January 2017 and August 2020. Included were all operations performed after 6 pm and before 8 am, not as a continuation of the scheduled operating list. We compared this to the total number of trauma surgeries performed in the same time period to calculate the percentage of our total operations.

**Results:** There were a total of 7,360 orthopaedic trauma operations performed in the 42 months. One hundred and sixty-four of these were 'out of hours'. This represents 2.2% of the total operations performed and is equal to 3.8 'out of hours' cases per month, or 0.9 per week. Fifty-five of the 164 (33.5%) were performed in children under the age of 18. 62 were performed between 6–8 pm, 61 between 8–10 pm, 31 between 10 pm and midnight, and the remaining 10 were performed between midnight and 3am.

**Conclusions:** Surgery out of hours has been associated with increased complications, and so decisions to perform emergency surgery should not be made lightly. However, they are frequently necessary. Thankfully in our cohort there was rarely a need to perform an orthopaedic operation after midnight (0.001%), reducing the potential for personnel fatigue to play a role.

**Keywords:** Trauma; emergency; out of hours

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### Footnote

*Conflicts of Interest:* The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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