



AB098. SOH23ABS_175. The impact of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on tonsillar surgical activity at University Hospital Limerick: a 3-year review

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Background: Tonsillectomy remains a common surgery whose indications include obstructive sleep disordered breathing and recurrent tonsillitis. Approximately 3,500 tonsillectomies are carried out in the Irish Republic yearly. With a catchment population of 450,000 people, 10% of the population, University Hospital Limerick (UHL) could be expected to carry out around 350 tonsillectomies in a given year. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) global pandemic emerged in Western Europe in early 2020 with devastating impact on elective healthcare. We sought to measure its impact on tonsillectomy surgery on an Irish University Hospital over a three-year period.

Methods: Otorhinolaryngology theatre logbooks for the years 2019–2021 were retrieved from medical records. Each theatre logbook was reviewed for the surgery of tonsillectomy plus another surgery. Patient identities, operating surgeons and their workload contribution to overall tonsillectomy numbers volume were not recorded. Tonsillectomy numbers for the three years were recorded to Microsoft excel and held on site in an encrypted file.

Results: A total of 202 tonsillectomies were performed in 2019, 62 were performed in 2020 and 80 were performed in 2021.

Conclusions: The COVID-19 pandemic alone cannot

be assumed to be the sole causative factor in the drop off in surgical output and there may be multiple independent influencing factors. However, COVID-19 has had far reaching impact on medical systems including loss of staff, expertise and resources. Further review of the causative factors in reduced tonsillectomy output in UHL is warranted.

Keywords: Tonsillectomy; Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT); otorhinolaryngology; head and neck; coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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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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