

The Patterns of Spine Surgeries at Mulago Hospital

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Abstract:

Background: Spine surgery is a specialised area of orthopaedics that is still in its formative stages in Africa. It may be done to relieve symptoms, or stabilise the spine to allow rehabilitation of patients. This review analyses spine surgeries done in the period 2005-2009 in a National Referral Hospital. Objectives: Patterns of spine surgeries. Design: A retrospective review of patients who underwent spine surgeries. Setting: Mulago National Referral Hospital, Uganda. Methods: Data was collected from theatre logs and the patient files retrieved for perusal. The data was then analysed. Results: Spine surgeries have been increasing in number over the years with a marked increase in 2009. Male patients were predominantly due to trauma while females were usually due to degenerative causes. Conclusion: Trauma especially that caused by road traffic accidents needs a holistic approach to adequately manage. There is need to facilitate surgeons with training and equipment so that their output may increase. Trauma still predominates as an indication for spine surgery. Outcome may be affected by delays in referral to the spine unit. The spine surgeon is increasingly being called upon to managed degenerative and developmental conditions.