



Improving access to patient information leaflets in patients undergoing emergency appendicectomy.

Harriet Louden¹ - Sam Lawday¹ - James Hewes¹

Correspondence: Harriet Louden, Department of General Surgery, Southmead Hospital, North Bristol NHS Trust, Southmead Road, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS10 5NB. Email: hlouden@doctors.org.uk

Abstract

Background: Informed consent is a cornerstone of ethical surgical practice. Patients undergoing emergency surgery have reduced time to consider their options when compared to the elective setting. Therefore, improving informed consent in this setting is critical. We aimed to increase the provision of a pre-operative patient information leaflet for patients undergoing an emergency appendicectomy by 50% over two audit cycles.

Methods: The same methodology was used for both cycles of this audit. Patients proceeding to appendicectomy at Southmead hospital, Bristol, were identified through histopathology lists over a two week period. Cycle one ran from 4th to 17th July, and cycle two ran from 18th to 31st July. All patients at Southmead are adults. Medical notes were reviewed for documentation of provision of the trust approved patient information leaflet. A QR code to an electronic version of the information leaflet was added to emergency clinic rooms, doctors handover rooms, and the SHO on call bleep between audit periods.

Results: In cycle one, 17 patients underwent emergency appendicectomy, of whom 10 were male, and 7 were female, with a median age of 37.5. All but one patient, 94%, proceeded laparoscopically. No patients received a patient information leaflet pre-operatively. In cycle two, 12 patients underwent emergency appendicectomy, five of whom were male and 7 were female, with a median age of 39. Two patients were converted to open surgery, 16%, both of whom had received a leaflet. Seven patients, 58%, received the recommended appendicectomy leaflet through utilisation of the QR code, prior to their operation.

Conclusion: The QR code provided a useful transportable resource, which was utilised by doctors and patients. This provides scope for progression in provision of leaflet for other surgical conditions, both in inpatient and outpatient settings, through utilisation of a QR code.

Cite as: Louden H, Lawday S, Hewes J et al. Improving access to patient information leaflets in patients undergoing emergency appendicectomy. *Impact Surgery*. 2024;1(1):19

1. Department of General Surgery, Southmead Hospital, North Bristol NHS Trust, Southmead Road, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS10 5NB

Research for Greener Surgery Conference, 13 December 2023, Great Hall, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK