

HAND SURGERY SERVICES

Hand and wrist surgery is performed at the Liverpool, Bankstown and Fairfield Hospitals. There are two specialist hand surgeons appointed.

Emergency hand surgery services are provided at Liverpool and Bankstown Hospitals. Liverpool Hospital provides the hand trauma services for the Area with hand trauma patients from other hospitals and emergency departments within SWSAHS being referred to Liverpool. Major hand trauma is also referred to Liverpool from Bankstown Hospital.

Elective hand and wrist surgery is performed at Liverpool, Bankstown and Fairfield Hospitals with patients being referred directly from surgeon's rooms.

In 2003, operating log books confirm about 1,500 hand and wrist surgery procedures were performed in SWSAHS. By the nature of the sub-specialty, hand surgery receives contributions from a diverse spectrum of specialties – orthopaedic surgery, plastic surgery, general surgery, vascular surgery and neurosurgery. Data tables of DRGs show a smaller workload than that recorded in operating logbooks.

The number of new patients doubled in the period 1999 to 2003. The incidence of hand injury in SWSAHS is high. It is expected that the service will continue to grow at the same rate over the next 3 years.

Area Outpatient Hand Therapy is delivered through Physiotherapy and/or occupational therapy Departments.

Current Services

Bankstown

The point of access for emergency hand surgery is via the Emergency Department. The departments of Orthopaedics and Plastic Surgery at Bankstown provide the emergency hand surgery roster conjointly. Bankstown provided approximately 300 hand and wrist procedures in 2003.

Liverpool

The major component of hand surgery performed at Liverpool hospital is trauma-related. The Emergency Department has 24 hour access to the plastic surgery registrar for hand trauma. Emergency wrist surgery is provided by the Orthopaedic Surgery Department. Liverpool provided approximately 1100 hand and wrist procedures in 2003.

A weekly hand clinic will commence in 2004 for the follow-up of post surgical patients and the assessment of elective and semi-urgent hand surgery cases.

The Hand Therapy workload at Liverpool Hospital includes attendance at Hand Clinics, inpatient care, outpatient follow-up and Emergency Department assistance for complex cases.

Fairfield

Elective wrist surgery is performed. Fairfield provided approximately 100 hand and wrist procedures in 2003.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Hand Surgery be developed as an Area-wide service.
- Liverpool be developed as Sydney's third major hand unit.
- A satellite service be provided at Bankstown Hospital for an elective workload.
- A separate hand roster be provided at Liverpool, reflecting the establishment of a Hand Surgery Department.
- Hand clinics be provided.
- Access to hand clinics to support postoperative rehabilitation be enhanced at Campbelltown, Bankstown and Liverpool.