



# A specific criteria-based guideline improves compliance with General Surgery ambulatory care standards and reduces overcrowding in “Hot Clinic”: A closed-loop prospective clinical audit

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## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** General Surgery ambulatory clinic or “Hot Clinic” (HC) are largely overcrowded nowadays and it has become a major issue. We performed a prospective audit to assess what proportion of patients attending HC meet the criteria for ambulatory care. We aimed to implement a specific criteria-based guideline and monitoring programme in order to improve the compliance with the ambulatory care criteria.

**Methods:** The audit included three cycles: baseline audit (30 days in September 2018), first re-audit (30 days in January 2019), and second re-audit (30 days in May 2019). Compliance with the HC standards was considered as the outcome measure (target: 100%). After a baseline audit, we implemented a specific criteria-based guideline for HC and designed a monitoring programme maintain the compliance with the guideline.

**Results:** During the baseline audit, 224 patients were seen in HC. After implementation of the guideline this was reduced to 40 patients in first re-audit and 42 patients in second re-audit. The median number of patients seen per day was significantly higher in the baseline audit [7(6-8)] compared with first re-audit [1(1-2),  $P < 0.0001$ ], and second re-audit [1(1-2),  $P < 0.0001$ ], however during the baseline audit, only 19% of patients had been seen by the General Surgery team prior to HC and only 19% of patients met the eligibility criteria for review in HC; both improved to 100% in the first re-audit ( $P < 0.0001$ ) and remained 100% in second re-audit ( $P < 0.0001$ ).

**Conclusions:** Implementation of criteria-based guideline suggested in this study led to improvement in the compliance with General Surgery ambulatory care standards and reduction in overcrowding of HC.

## BIOGRAPHY

Ketevan Papidze Has graduated from Paediatric faculty of Tbilisi State Medical University (MD) and started her postgraduate education in Paediatric Surgery. During 3 years as junior paediatric surgeon she worked in Orthopaedic surgery, Suppurative Surgery, Neonatal surgery and General Surgery departments of TSMU paediatric clinic. She is currently working in YGC in UK as SHO in General Surgery and has previously worked in Urology, Breast Surgery and Vascular surgery.



[5<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit on Surgery and Transplantation](#) | March 18, 2021

**Citation:** Ketevan Papidze, A specific criteria-based guideline improves compliance with General Surgery ambulatory care standards and reduces overcrowding in “Hot Clinic”: A closed-loop prospective clinical audit, Surgery Meetings 2021, 5th Annual Summit on Surgery and Transplantation, March 18th, 2021, page 02