

Trends in Endoscopic Management of Bladder Tumours post lockdown in Australia. Have we caught up?

**Gideon Ptasznik Xuan Rui Sean Ong, Dominic Bagguley, Daniel Moon, Nathan Pappa
and Declan Murphy.**

Institution: Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre

Introduction

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a gradual and measured lockdown occurred in Australia from March 2020 and tightened in April 2020. This included both social restrictions as well as restrictions to elective surgical procedures to both mitigate and prepare for spread of the virus. After an extended period without new Covid-19 cases, lockdown was lifted Nationwide. Victoria was the last state to enjoy easing of restrictions, which occurred in late October 2020. We aim to investigate the effect of easing restrictions had on the number of TURBTs being performed in Australia and if we have caught up.

Methods

For our methods, we investigated the Medicare Item Reports that were obtained from publicly listed sources for transurethral resection of small and large bladder tumours (TURBT) in Australia from November 2018 – March 2019 (pre-lockdown) and November 2020 - March 2021 (post-lockdown) ¹ . Comparisons were made between trends pre and post lockdown in Australia.

Results

The number of small and large TURBTs performed between November 2018 – March 2019 (pre-lockdown) and November 2020 - March 2021 (post-lockdown) were 6556 and 6806 respectively¹. The average number of TURBTs performed per month during the same period in 2018-19 was 1311. Comparatively, average number of TURBTs performed per month post lockdown was 1361¹. This is a 3.7% increase between pre and post lockdown. During lockdown there was in fact a 5% decrease

overall¹. For Victoria in particular, the average number of TURBTS per month for the same period compared between 2018-19 and 2020-21 was 265 vs 276 respectively. This was a 4% increase¹.

Conclusion

Although Lockdown showed a 5% decrease between 2019 and 2020 data, post lockdown data shows Victoria & Australia is striving to catch up¹.

ⁱ http://medicarestatistics.humanservices.gov.au/statistics/mbs_item.jsp

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