Elective hip and knee replacement surgery in the independent sector

Executive summary

NHS Partners Network

The NHS Partners Network (NHSPN) is the trade association representing the widest range of independent sector providers of NHS services ranging through acute, diagnostic, primary and community care, and dental care. Our members are drawn from both the “for profit” and “not for profit” sectors and include large international hospital groups and small specialist providers, and all are committed to working in partnership with the NHS and to the values set out in the NHS Constitution. Our members deliver care ranging from primary to acute elective provision as well as out of hours and home-based services. NHSPN is one of the networks of the NHS Confederation – the independent membership body for the full range of organisations that make up the modern NHS.

Background

For many years the independent sector has treated NHS patients to help the NHS deliver high quality cost effective care. Yet there has been very little comparative data to enable patients and clinicians to make informed choices about their care.

In November 2011, for the first time, the Dr Foster Good Hospital Guide included independent sector providers of NHS care in their data on elective hip and knee replacements. Although the independent sector only provides roughly 3% of all elective NHS care, for elective hip and knee surgery this figures rises to almost a fifth (19%).

The data in the Dr Foster guide showed that the treatment the sector provides is of a very high standard with independent sector facilities achieving some of the best outcomes for elective hip and knee replacement surgery.

As Dr Foster did not include data on the independent sector in the 2012 Good Hospital Guide, the NHS Partners Network have compiled comparative data on elective hip and knee replacement in the independent sector to allow year-on-year comparisons between the NHS and the independent sector, as well as between individual facilities from both sectors, to be made.
The data - key summary

Combining the hip and knee replacement surgery data with data from other official sources gives the most comprehensive overview so far of the many different aspects of a patient's care and compares NHS and independent sector providers to enable patients and clinicians to make informed decisions. The Government is keen to promote patient choice but for anyone to make a truly informed choice it is critical that they have access to independent information on which to base their decision.

PROMS "health gain" from elective hip and knee surgery

- Independent sector organisations who carry out elective primary hip and knee replacement surgery for the NHS dominate the top 10 providers for improving patients' quality of life following the procedure.

- Of the top ten providers for hip replacement surgery, seven are from the independent sector. In the top five, four are independent sector providers.

- Of the top ten providers of knee replacement surgery eight of the top ten are independent sector providers. In the top five, three are independent sector providers.

- More than 70,000 hip replacements and 70,000 knee replacements are carried out in the NHS in England every year. They are two of the most commonly performed orthopaedic procedures and can significantly improve patient quality of life.

- The independent sector now carries out almost a fifth (19%) of all elective hip and knee replacement surgery done in the NHS in England.

- The independent sector can thus be seen to deliver some of the highest quality orthopaedic care for NHS patients as determined by patients themselves.

Elective hip and knee replacement readmission rates

- Activity volumes for both hip and knee replacement readmission rates confirm that nearly a fifth of NHS procedures are done by the independent sector.

- For both hips and knees readmission rates the independent sector rate is well below the general NHS rate and clearly comparable to NHS specialist orthopaedic hospital rates.

National Joint Registry

- Patient consent rates (the rate at which patients have agreed to have their data added into the NJR) in the NHS and independent sector are clearly comparable as is average patient age.
• Average ASA grade (the ASA physical status classification system is a system for assessing the fitness of patients before surgery) is also closely comparable between the two sectors – and far more so than had been supposed in the past.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) compliance rates

• The Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) reported compliance rates for core quality outcomes covers all CQC outcomes where there is both NHS and independent sector data available and where there were at least 25 providers inspected in each category during the inspection period.

• The data shows that in many of the areas that we know matter most to patients the compliance rates for the independent sector are higher than the NHS.

• One of the key areas that patients are concerned about is dignity and respect. Almost all independent providers (98% in hospitals and 96% in community are meeting the required standard on dignity and respect.

Conclusion

Good high quality clinical care is crucial and this data shows that the independent sector delivers NHS care to the highest clinical standards. But we know that patients want other criteria to be met as well. Good clinical care alone is not enough and patients today, quite rightly, expect to be treated with dignity and respect in a safe and caring environment. It is only when all these additional criteria are met that patients will judge their care to be truly outstanding.

This new data reassures both patients and GPs that they can choose independent sector providers with confidence.

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