

Mortality of emergency abdominal surgery in high, middle and low income countries

GlobalSurg Collaborative*

www.globalsurg.org, enquiry@globalsurg.org, @GlobalSurg

* *Collaborating members are shown at the end of the manuscript*

Correspondence: Dr Aneel Bhangu, Academic Department of Surgery, Room 29, 4th Floor, Old Queen Elizabeth Hospital, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, B15 2TH, UK

Email: aneelbhangu@doctors.org.uk

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Abstract

Background: Surgical mortality data are routinely collected in high income countries, yet virtually no low or middle income countries have outcome surveillance in place. We aimed to prospectively collect worldwide mortality data following emergency abdominal surgery, comparing findings across low, middle and high Human Development Index (HDI) countries.

Methods: A prospective, multicentre, cohort study. Self-selected hospitals performing emergency surgery submitted pre-specified data for consecutive patients from at least one two-week period July-December 2014. Postoperative mortality was analysed by hierarchical multivariable logistic regression.

Results: Data were obtained for 10,745 patients from 357 centres in 58 countries; 6538 were from high, 2889 from middle and 1318 from low HDI settings. Overall mortality was 1.6% at 24 hours (high 1.1%, middle 1.9%, low 3.4%, $p < 0.001$), increasing to 5.3% by 30 days (high 4.5%, middle 6.0%, low 8.7%, $p < 0.001$). Of the 578 patients who died, 69.9% ($n=404$) did so between 24 hours and 30 days following surgery (high 74.2%, middle 68.8%, low 60.5%). After adjustment, 30-day mortality remained higher in middle (OR 2.78, 95% CI 1.84-4.20) and low-income countries (OR 2.97, 1.84-4.81). Surgical safety checklist use was lower in LMICs, but when used was associated with reduced mortality at both 24 hours and 30 days.

Conclusions: Mortality is three times higher in low compared with high HDI countries even when adjusted for prognostic factors. Patient safety factors may have an important role and require further investigation. This study strongly supports 30 day mortality as an international benchmark. (ClinicalTrials.gov: NCT02179112).

Introduction

Global health priorities are typically assessed by measuring the burden of various diseases, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), tuberculosis, malaria and trauma. Surgery, however, contributes to the treatment of a very wide range of conditions and its significance may have been obscured by a disease based approach to international health¹. This is changing and the importance of surgery to human health and welfare has been highlighted by several recent studies²⁻⁴. For instance, 17 of the 51 million people who died across the world in 2012 suffered from diseases needing surgical care^{1,2}. Access to surgical care varies widely^{3,4}. It has been estimated that less than a third of the world's population have access to safe, timely and affordable surgery and only 6% of the 300 million surgical procedures performed each year take place in a low or middle income country (LMIC) despite one third of people living there². There are firm moves, supported by the World Health Organisation, to improve access to surgical care^{3,5}. However safe surgery requires considerable infrastructure and improving coverage should go hand in hand with quality assurance³. Surgical mortality data are collected routinely in high income health systems but 70% of countries lack routine surgical surveillance systems^{4,6}.

In this study we take the first step towards remedying the undesirable lack of information by creating an international network of surgeons across all continents to measure mortality rates following emergency abdominal surgery. This represents a common operation type that is carried out with life-saving intent but which nevertheless carries substantial mortality. This makes it an important topic in its own right and a **potential** proxy for surgical care generally. The aim of this study was to collect postoperative mortality data and analyse variation in factors that might affect mortality. In this first report we describe the feasibility of collecting 'bedside' patient level data across low, middle and high income settings using a new collaborative network. We specifically compared the performance and practicality of using 24 hour or 30 day postoperative mortality as the primary outcome measure in a wide variety of clinical settings. Additionally, we test variation in mortality attributed to markers of prognosis (including operation type) and service (**marked by availability and use of safety checklists**).

Methods

Study design

An international, multicentre, prospective, observational cohort study was conducted according to a pre-specified, registered and published protocol (ClinicalTrials.gov identifier: NCT02179112)⁷. A UK National Health Service Research Ethics review considered this study exempt from formal research registration (South East Scotland Research Ethics Service, reference: NR/1404AB12); individual centres obtained their own audit, ethical or institutional approval. Results are reported according to STROBE guidelines⁸.

Study period

Investigators from self-selected surgical units identified consecutive patients within two-week time periods between 1st July 2014 and 31st December 2014. An open invitation for participation was disseminated through social media, personal contacts, email to authors of published emergency surgery studies, and national/international surgical organisations. Short intensive data collection periods allowed surgical teams within these units to contribute meaningful numbers of patients without requiring additional resources. The study period covered an extended time period to accommodate the availability of local investigators and variable holiday periods, while helping to smooth seasonal variation that can affect surgical pathology. An institution could collect over as many two week periods as desired within the study period.

Patients and procedures

Consecutive patients undergoing emergency intraperitoneal surgery during the chosen two-week period were included. There were no age restrictions. Emergency surgery was defined as any unplanned, non-elective operation, including re-operation after a previous procedure. Intraperitoneal surgery was defined as any open, laparoscopic or laparoscopic-converted procedure that entered the peritoneal cavity. Elective (planned) or semi-elective procedures (where a patient initially admitted as an emergency was then discharged from hospital and re-admitted at later time for surgery) were excluded. Additionally, patients undergoing caesarean section were excluded as they represent a separate operative group with different management needs that have been studied elsewhere⁹.

Data

Included patients were followed to day 30 after surgery or for the length of their inpatient stay where follow-up was not feasible. Records were uploaded by local investigators to a secure online website, provided using the Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) system¹⁰. The lead investigator at each site checked the accuracy of all cases prior to data submission. The submitted data were then checked centrally and where missing data were identified, the local lead investigator was contacted and asked to make good the record. Once vetted, the record was accepted into the dataset for analysis.

Outcome measures

The primary outcome measure was the 24 hour postoperative mortality rate. This is the number of deaths during the operation or within 24 hours of the operation's conclusion, divided by the number of eligible operations performed.¹¹ The main secondary outcome measure was the 30 day postoperative mortality rate. Where 30 day follow-up was unavailable, alive-dead status at the point of discharge from hospital was recorded. Other secondary outcome measures included postoperative complication and reintervention rates. For the purposes of clarity, these will be described in subsequent reports where sufficient detail can be included.

Independent (exploratory) variables

We collected the following patient level factors in order to adjust outcome:

- Patient factors: age, gender, diabetes, smoking status, American Society of Anaesthesiologists (ASA) physical status classification system.
- Disease factors: seven major diagnostic groups were included, representing the spectrum of disease encountered. Additionally, the presence of a perforated abdominal viscus found at operation was included.
- Hospital safety: availability and use of a surgical safety checklist for each patient.

Power considerations

The sample size was limited by practical factors and estimation of power by uncertainty over critical quantities such as clustering and variation in mortality by diagnosis. An indicative power calculation is given in the protocol.

Statistical Analysis

Variation across different international health settings was assessed by stratifying participating centres by country into three tertiles according to Human Development Index rank (HDI). This is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education, and income indices published by the United Nations (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics>). This aggregate measure of country development that keeps individual countries anonymous, especially since single unit participation was expected from some nations; this would make country level statistical analysis less useful and potential patient identification possible.

Differences between HDI tertiles were tested with the Pearson chi-squared test and Kruskal-Wallis test for categorical and continuous variables respectively.

Hierarchical multivariable logistic regression models (random intercept) were constructed with three levels: patients nested within hospitals, nested within countries. HDI tertile and other explanatory variables were included as fixed effects. Other than HDI tertile, all fixed effects were considered at the level of the patient. Coefficients are expressed as odds ratios (OR) with confidence intervals and p values derived from percentiles of 10,000 bootstrap replications. Model residuals were checked at all three levels and first-order interactions explored. Goodness of model fit is reported with the Hosmer and Lemeshow (H&L) test and predictive ability described by area under the receiver operator curve (c-statistic).

To help visualise the relationship of outcomes with a continuous representation of the human development index (HDI rank), the final fixed effect regression models were used with a restricted cubic spline for HDI rank (three knots distributed equally across the range of HDI rank) to allow for potential non-linear relationships. Predictions were made for specified covariate levels and bootstrapped confidence intervals generated.

A pre-specified sensitivity analysis was performed. We predicted that some patients will be discharged alive but not followed-up at 30 days. For the main analysis, we coded these patients as alive. To test the validity of this approach, we excluded these 'discharged alive; not followed-up' patients and re-ran the 30 day mortality analysis.

All analyses were undertaken using the R Foundation Statistical Program (R 3.1.1), using packages plyr, stringr, ggplot2, reshape2, jsonlite, RCurl, httr, Hmisc, rms, lme4 and knitr.

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Results

Patients

A total of 10,906 patient records were submitted and 10,745 records were formally accepted for analysis following the quality control algorithm described above. These patients came from 357 centres across 58 countries (figure 1), with 6538 (60.8%) from high, 2889 (26.9%) from middle and 1318 (12.3%) from low HDI settings. A complete record with no missing data was achieved in 99.1% of patients (10,644/10,745); 24 hour outcome data were available in 99.9% (13 missing) and 30 day mortality in 99.8% (24 missing) patients.

Demographics

Differences in demographics across HDI groups are shown in Table 1. Appendicectomy was the most commonly performed operation across all HDI settings (high 38.2%, middle 53.3%, low 38.5%; Fig 2, Table S1). Trauma was the indication for surgery in a higher proportion of cases in middle and low HDI countries (10.0% and 12.1% respectively) compared with high HDI countries (2.2%). Use of a midline laparotomy for intraperitoneal access increased across development index (high 27.1%, middle 27.5%, low 40.9%). Use of a surgical safety checklist occurred in 74.4% of cases, varying significantly across HDI groups (91.2% high, 55.7% middle, 32.1% low, $p < 0.001$).

Crude mortality across HDI groups

Crude 24 hour mortality was 1.6% and 30 day mortality was 5.3%. Twenty four hour mortality increased three fold across HDI groups (high 1.1%, middle 1.9%, low 3.4%, $p < 0.001$). Likewise there was an inverse relationship between 30 day mortality and HDI (high 4.5%, middle 6.0%, low 8.7%, $p < 0.001$).

Mortality varied across HDI group for some operations, but not others. Following appendicectomy, overall 24 hour mortality (0.02%) and 30 day mortality (0.2%) were low and did not vary significantly between HDI groups (30 day mortality high 0.1%, middle 0.1%, low 0.6%). However, mortality following midline laparotomy was higher (4.7% at 24 hours and 14.6% at 30 days) and varied across HDI groups (30 day mortality high 13.0%, middle 17.5%, low 17.3%, $p < 0.001$, Fig 3).

Trauma was the indication with the highest 24 hour mortality at 8.4% (high 8.4%, middle 6.6%, low 11.9%, $p=0.144$) rising to 13.9% at 30 days (high 13.3%, middle 11.7%, low 18.2%, $p=0.157$).

Mortality increased from high to low HDI at ASA levels 1-4, but at ASA 5 mortality reduced by half in the lower income groups (30 day mortality high 55.9%, middle 27.7%, low 24.6%, $p<0.001$, Table 2).

24 hour versus 30 day mortality

Of the 578 patients who died, 69.9% ($n=404$) did so between 24 hours and 30 days following surgery (high 74.2%, middle 68.8%, low 60.5%). Most of the deaths in this time period related to patients with non-traumatic indications for index surgery (92.1% non-trauma, 7.9% trauma, Table 3).

Mortality adjusted for case-mix

Models of mortality accounted for the clustering of patients within hospitals and patients/hospitals within countries. The effects of prognostic factors on 24 hour mortality are shown in Table S2, and on 30 day mortality in Table 4. After adjusting for case-mix (including age, gender, history of diabetes, smoking history, ASA grade and diagnostic group, presence of a perforated viscus, checklist use), independent correlation between increased mortality in LMICs at 24 hours and 30 days remained. Across the entire dataset, use of a surgical safety checklist was associated with lower hospital mortality rates at both 24 hours and 30 days. Having a checklist available but not using it was associated with reduced mortality at 24 hours but not at 30 days.

Mortality analyses were repeated using non-linear models (Fig 4). These showed that 30 day mortality was a better discriminator of HDI than 24 hour mortality.

Sensitivity analyses

Some 17.7% of patients were discharged alive and assumed to still be alive at 30 days. Excluding these patients from analysis of main outcomes did not affect the size or direction of effects across HDI groups (Table S3).

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Discussion

This study is the first to measure mortality following emergency abdominal surgery systematically at a worldwide level, thereby enabling comparisons to be made across low, middle and high HDI countries. It shows that our collaborative 'bedside' network can collect mortality statistics following surgery on a large scale, even in low HDI countries, and that follow-up to discharge or 30 days is achievable in the majority of survivors. Mortality after emergency abdominal surgery is two-to-three times higher in low compared with high HDI countries. More than half the patients who die within 30 days did so after 24 hours, strongly supporting 30 day perioperative mortality rate as an international benchmark. This study supports its inclusion in the 2014 World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Reference List of 100 Core Health indicators⁵. It also identifies appendicectomy as the most common emergency general surgical operation performed around the world and in all development tertiles.

The trend towards higher mortality (24 hour and 30 days) in low income countries remained after adjusting for observable prognostic factors. The association between increasing mortality and lower HDI may be explained by unobserved differences in prognosis in different HDI countries, differences in treatment, or both. Higher mortality was seen specifically in trauma cases, and in patients undergoing midline laparotomy. When patients were classified into appendicectomy and non-appendicectomy, those in low income countries had higher mortality rates although the result was not significant among the cases who had had an appendicectomy, arguably because the death rate is low with this operation. Mortality was also higher in LMIC countries for each ASA grade up to level 5, where the trend reverses, perhaps because of reluctance to operate on those moribund patients in resource poor settings.

Surgical safety checklists were included in this study as a marker of hospital safety. Use declined markedly across high to low HDI settings and their use was associated with reduced mortality at both 24 hours and 30 days even after adjustment. When a checklist was available but not used, this was associated with higher mortality at 24 hours but not 30 days, compared to hospitals systems without one at all. This may be a reflection of the urgency of surgery in these cases. However this study cannot definitively determine whether the checklist itself is responsible for improved outcomes, or whether the checklist is merely a marker of safer hospital systems^{12, 13}. That said, the fact that risk adjustment for trauma did not affect the mortality gradient across HDI tertiles

and that checklist use was associated with reduced mortality, does provide a hint that not all the difference in outcome in LMIC was the result of prognostic factors alone.

An important strategy in our collaborator recruitment was to invert the traditional research model. Rather than department heads, junior clinicians were often the contact point by which a hospital became involved. Social media and technology played an important role in the recruitment and running of the study¹⁴. Collaborators, particularly in LMICs, were clear in their view that those providing the clinical care can generate high quality data and lead international clinical research. By providing clear protocols, administrative support, secure web-based data collection, and continued direct access to collected data, the collaborative continues to be met with a striking enthusiasm across a diverse range of settings. This collaboration has proved that large studies crossing cultures and levels of socioeconomic development are feasible without extensive resources when data collection is performed during a short but intensive time period¹⁵. This international surgical network includes strong LMIC partners and has established the feasibility of a common data-sharing platform that is accessible on computers and mobile phones.

The strengths of this study lie in the scale of the network, range of countries included, duration of follow-up, low rates of missing data, and clinical and service detail obtained. Nevertheless, a study of this scale has some inevitable limitations.

We were not able to independently audit entered cases against operative logbooks. However case sheets were signed off by the head at each centre and the dataset was not accepted centrally until remediable deficiencies had been corrected. The data is likely to be more accurate than local administrative data because it was collected by enthusiastic clinicians who understood its purpose. It also contains more clinical detail than can be found in routinely collected data.

It was not possible to capture all salient risk factors. **Our risk adjustment strategy purposely used a limited number of variables to facilitate future comparisons, both locally and in other research studies. A balance must be struck between a desire to collect ever more variables and the practical delivery of a study. However other strategies utilising additional predictive variables should be explored in the future.** As stated in the introduction, access to surgery is poor in many LMICs with the consequence that patients may present late². The effect of late presentation may not be fully captured in variables

such as the ASA score which we were able to collect^{18, 19}. The proportion of cases undergoing different types of operation varied by HDI tertile, but we compared outcomes by operation type and ASA score as well as overall. **The short timeframes for data capture by local collaborators are tangible and realistic, but do risk selection bias, such as seasonal variation in local presentations. Longer enrolment strategies will help quantify this potential bias.**

Use of HDI allowed a comparison between countries by an accepted classification, although other classifications exist, comprised of different measures and cut-offs. **By grouping countries, between-country variation will not be detected but is likely to be significant. There is likely to be a selection bias towards better-resourced institutions taking part in this study, even in low income settings. An indication that this was the case is provided by the observation that pulse oximetry was used in a very high proportion of cases despite known shortages in low income settings²⁰. Furthermore, a high proportion of senior anaesthetists were present, which may not be expected outside of better funded centres. This selection bias may mean data are not typical of some district or rural hospitals, in terms of distribution of pathology or outcomes. It is therefore likely that this study underestimates mortality in these specific settings. This paper cannot reflect the millions of people without access to essential surgery, for whom investment in infrastructure, training and financial strategies of inpatient care are needed in addition to safety measures alone.**

This network can now work together to develop quality improvement collaboratives of the sort that have driven improved standards in high income countries¹⁶. A second cohort study allows us to increase participation (registration available at <http://globalsurg.org/>) with surgeons able to re-audit their practice. It will also allow us to test the impact of new risk factors, including HIV status and the impact of pre-hospital delays. From this platform, we are trying to establish a consortium of representative centres to deliver large scale trials with global reach¹⁷. A fundamental objective moving forward is the evidence-based identification of cost-effective interventions to reduce disparities in outcomes after surgery between countries.

Table 1. Patient factors by human development index (HDI) tertile

		HDI tertile			P value
		High, n=6538	Middle, n=2889	Low, n=1318	
Age (completed years)	Mean (SD)	3162 (48.4)	1600 (55.4)	808 (61.3)	<0.001
Gender	Male	3373 (51.6)	1289 (44.6)	510 (38.7)	<0.001*
	Female	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
	Missing	2701 (41.3)	1648 (57)	613 (46.5)	
ASA	1	2004 (30.7)	728 (25.2)	352 (26.7)	<0.001
	2	1134 (17.3)	283 (9.8)	162 (12.3)	
	3	411 (6.3)	98 (3.4)	43 (3.3)	
	4	102 (1.6)	65 (2.2)	69 (5.2)	
	5	183 (2.8)	66 (2.3)	76 (5.8)	
	Unknown	3 (0)	1 (0)	3 (0.2)	
	Missing	6044 (92.4)	2686 (93)	1226 (93)	
Diabetes history	No	491 (7.5)	203 (7)	92 (7)	0.622
	Yes	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
	Missing	4633 (70.9)	2247 (77.8)	1100 (83.5)	
Smoking currently	No	1901 (29.1)	640 (22.2)	217 (16.5)	<0.001
	Yes	4 (0.1)	2 (0.1)	1 (0.1)	
	Missing	5522 (84.5)	2416 (83.6)	1049 (79.6)	
Diagnosis type	Non trauma / non cancer	407 (6.2)	80 (2.8)	57 (4.3)	<0.001
	Neoplasm	143 (2.2)	290 (10)	159 (12.1)	
	Trauma	181 (2.8)	48 (1.7)	14 (1.1)	
	No disease identified	285 (4.4)	55 (1.9)	39 (3)	
	Complication of previous procedure	3883 (59.4)	2354 (81.5)	1173 (89)	
CT performed	No	2652 (40.6)	535 (18.5)	145 (11)	<0.001
	Yes	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	
	Missing	3966 (60.7)	1230 (42.6)	586 (44.5)	
Procedure start time	0800-1800 (daytime)	1401 (21.4)	755 (26.1)	367 (27.8)	<0.001
	1800-2200 (evening)	1167 (17.8)	901 (31.2)	365 (27.7)	
	2200-0800 (night-time)	4 (0.1)	3 (0.1)	0 (0)	
	Missing	1382 (21.1)	1324 (45.8)	607 (46.1)	
Admission to procedure time	< 6 hours	1192 (18.2)	723 (25)	287 (21.8)	<0.001
	6-11 hours	1510 (23.1)	462 (16)	189 (14.3)	
	12-23 hour	1031 (15.8)	171 (5.9)	94 (7.1)	
	24-47 hours	1415 (21.6)	204 (7.1)	139 (10.5)	
	48+ hours	8 (0.1)	5 (0.2)	2 (0.2)	
Surgical safety checklist used	Missing	422 (6.5)	1029 (35.6)	474 (36)	<0.001
	No, not available in this hospital	146 (2.2)	248 (8.6)	421 (31.9)	
	No, but available in this hospital	5967 (91.3)	1608 (55.7)	423 (32.1)	
	Yes	3 (0)	4 (0.1)	0 (0)	
Senior surgeon >5 years training	Missing	182 (2.8)	1208 (41.8)	384 (29.1)	<0.001
	No	6353 (97.2)	1676 (58)	934 (70.9)	
	Yes	3 (0)	5 (0.2)	0 (0)	
Senior anaesthetist >5 years training	Missing	262 (4)	1395 (48.3)	524 (39.8)	<0.001
	No	6273 (95.9)	1490 (51.6)	794 (60.2)	
	Yes	3 (0)	4 (0.1)	0 (0)	
Anaesthetic type	Missing	6438 (98.5)	2213 (76.6)	1219 (92.5)	<0.001
	General	97 (1.5)	673 (23.3)	98 (7.4)	
	Spinal or sedation	3 (0)	3 (0.1)	1 (0.1)	
Laparoscopic approach	Missing	3369 (51.5)	2622 (90.8)	1238 (93.9)	<0.001
	No	3169 (48.5)	267 (9.2)	80 (6.1)	
	Yes	5454 (83.4)	2608 (90.3)	1112 (84.4)	
Bowel resection	Missing	1077 (16.5)	276 (9.6)	205 (15.6)	<0.001
	No	7 (0.1)	5 (0.2)	1 (0.1)	
	Yes	5860 (89.6)	2732 (94.6)	1195 (90.7)	
Stoma formed	Missing	674 (10.3)	152 (5.3)	123 (9.3)	<0.001
	No	4 (0.1)	5 (0.2)	0 (0)	
	Yes	5475 (83.7)	2406 (83.3)	913 (69.3)	
Perforated viscus	Missing	1059 (16.2)	476 (16.5)	377 (28.6)	<0.001
	No	4 (0.1)	7 (0.2)	28 (2.1)	
	Yes	239 (3.7)	515 (17.8)	101 (7.7)	
Supplementary oxygen	Missing	6296 (96.3)	2370 (82)	1187 (90.1)	<0.001
	No	3 (0)	4 (0.1)	30 (2.3)	
	Yes	39 (0.6)	129 (4.5)	15 (1.1)	
Pulse oximetry	Missing	6496 (99.4)	2756 (95.4)	1303 (98.9)	<0.001
	No	3 (0)	4 (0.1)	0 (0)	
	Yes	824 (12.6)	370 (12.8)	177 (13.4)	
Prophylactic antibiotics	Missing	5709 (87.3)	2514 (87)	1140 (86.5)	0.710
	No	5 (0.1)	5 (0.2)	1 (0.1)	

Data are n (% by column) unless otherwise indicated. ASA-American Society of Anaesthesiologists physical status classification system. CT-computed tomography. *P value is for Kruskal-Wallis test, otherwise Pearson χ^2 test.

Table 2. Outcomes by HDI tertile and ASA

ASA	24h mortality			30 day mortality		
	High	Middle	Low	High	Middle	Low
1	1/2701 (0.0)	8/1648 (0.5)	3/613 (0.5)	5/2701 (0.2)	25/1648 (1.5)	13/613 (2.1)
2	4/2004 (0.2)	8/728 (1.1)	11/352 (3.1)	23/2004 (1.1)	31/728 (4.3)	27/352 (7.7)
3	14/1134 (1.2)	15/283 (5.3)	9/162 (5.6)	82/1134 (7.2)	50/283 (17.7)	31/162 (19.1)
4	18/411 (4.4)	12/98 (12.2)	6/43 (14.0)	110/411 (26.8)	43/98 (43.9)	15/43 (34.9)
5	31/102 (30.4)	9/65 (13.8)	11/69 (15.9)	57/102 (55.9)	18/65 (27.7)	17/69 (24.6)
Unknown	7/183 (3.8)	2/66 (3.0)	5/76 (6.6)	14/183 (7.7)	6/66 (9.1)	11/76 (14.5)
Missing	0/3 (0.0)	0/1 (0.0)	0/3 (0.0)	0/3 (0.0)	0/1 (0.0)	0/3 (0.0)

Data are n (%).

Table 3. Mortality between 24 hours and 30 days. Percentages are presented split by row, indicating the distribution of those that died in 24 hours versus subsequent deaths for each group.

		Total Died (n=578)	Died within 24 h (n=174)	Died after 24 h within 30 days (n=404)	P value
HDI tertile	High	291	75/291 (25.8)	216/291 (74.2)	0.024
	Middle	173	54/173 (31.3)	119/173 (68.8)	
	Low	114	45/114 (39.5)	69/114 (60.5)	
Diagnosis	Appendicitis	8	2/8 (25.0)	6/8 (75.0)	*
	No disease identified	17	3/17 (17.6)	14/17 (82.4)	
	Other abdominal	339	90/339 (26.5)	249/339 (73.5)	
	Neoplasm	78	16/78 (20.5)	62/78 (79.5)	
	Gallstones	10	1/10 (10.0)	9/10 (90.0)	
	Complication of previous procedure	44	12/44 (27.3)	32/44 (72.7)	
	Trauma	82	50/82 (61.0)	32/82 (39.0)	

Data are n (%), by row. P values χ^2 test. *categories presented for information, no statistical comparisons performed.

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Table 4. Factors associated with 30 day mortality. More detailed diagnosis information is shown in supplemental table S1.

		Alive	Died	Univariable OR (95% CI, P value)	Multilevel OR (95% CI, P value)
HDI tertile	High	6240 (61.5)	291 (50.3)		
	Middle	2701 (26.6)	173 (29.9)	1.37 (1.13-1.66, p=0.001)	2.78 (1.84-4.20) p=0.000
	Low	1202 (11.9)	114 (19.7)	2.03 (1.62-2.54, p=0.000)	2.97 (1.84-4.81) p=0.000
Age (years; standardised)	Mean (SD)	38.7 (22.3)	58.5 (24.3)	2.36 (2.16-2.58, p=0.000)	1.68 (1.48-1.91) p=0.000
Gender	Male	5229 (51.6)	333 (57.6)		
	Female	4914 (48.4)	245 (42.4)	0.78 (0.66-0.93, p=0.005)	1.14 (0.92-1.41) p=0.240
Diabetes history	No	9467 (93.3)	469 (81.1)		
	Yes	676 (6.7)	109 (18.9)	3.25 (2.59-4.05, p=0.000)	1.21 (0.92-1.58) p=0.174
Smoking currently	No	7569 (74.6)	395 (68.3)		
	Yes	2571 (25.4)	183 (31.7)	1.36 (1.14-1.63, p=0.001)	0.86 (0.69-1.08) p=0.195
ASA	1	4910 (48.4)	43 (7.4)		
	2	2997 (29.6)	81 (14.0)	3.09 (2.14-4.52, p=0.000)	1.64 (1.10-2.45) p=0.016
	3	1415 (14.0)	163 (28.2)	13.15 (9.44-18.72, p=0.000)	4.69 (3.15-6.99) p=0.000
	4	382 (3.8)	168 (29.1)	50.22 (35.70-72.11, p=0.000)	18.21 (11.95-27.74) p=0.000
	5	144 (1.4)	92 (15.9)	72.95 (49.31-109.52, p=0.000)	30.23 (18.60-49.14) p=0.000
	Unknown	292 (2.9)	31 (5.4)	12.12 (7.47-19.46, p=0.000)	6.95 (3.90-12.38) p=0.000
Diagnosis	Appendicitis	4532 (44.7)	8 (1.4)		
	No disease identified	222 (2.2)	17 (2.9)	43.38 (19.08-107.33, p=0.000)	32.52 (13.01-81.32) p=0.000
	Other abdominal	3147 (31.0)	339 (58.7)	61.02 (32.40-134.55, p=0.000)	20.09 (9.85-40.99) p=0.000
	Neoplasm	464 (4.6)	78 (13.5)	95.23 (48.63-215.20, p=0.000)	27.47 (12.88-58.58) p=0.000
	Gallstones	937 (9.2)	10 (1.7)	6.05 (2.38-15.88, p=0.000)	3.37 (1.31-8.69) p=0.012
	Complication of previous procedure	331 (3.3)	44 (7.6)	75.30 (37.15-173.90, p=0.000)	18.91 (8.58-41.67) p=0.000
	Trauma	510 (5.0)	82 (14.2)	91.08 (46.64-205.48, p=0.000)	23.04 (10.80-49.12) p=0.000
Perforated viscus	No	8424 (83.3)	356 (61.9)		
	Yes	1687 (16.7)	219 (38.1)	3.07 (2.57-3.66, p=0.000)	1.82 (1.46-2.27) p=0.000
Surgical safety checklist used	No, not available in this hospital	1793 (17.7)	128 (22.1)		
	No, but available in this hospital	719 (7.1)	95 (16.4)	1.85 (1.40-2.44, p=0.000)	1.28 (0.81-2.03) p=0.294
	Yes	7628 (75.2)	355 (61.4)	0.65 (0.53-0.81, p=0.000)	0.62 (0.42-0.92) p=0.016

Data are n (% by column) unless otherwise indicated. Confidence intervals and p values derived from percentiles of 10000 bootstrap predictions. Total N=10690. AIC=2974. c-statistic=0.93. H&L GOF test $\chi^2 = 13.3$, df = 8, P value = 0.102. ASA-American Society of Anaesthesiologists physical status classification system. OR-odds ratio. CI-confidence interval.

Figure legends

Fig 1: Collaborating centres and proportion of enrolled patients with trauma diagnosis, by contributing country.

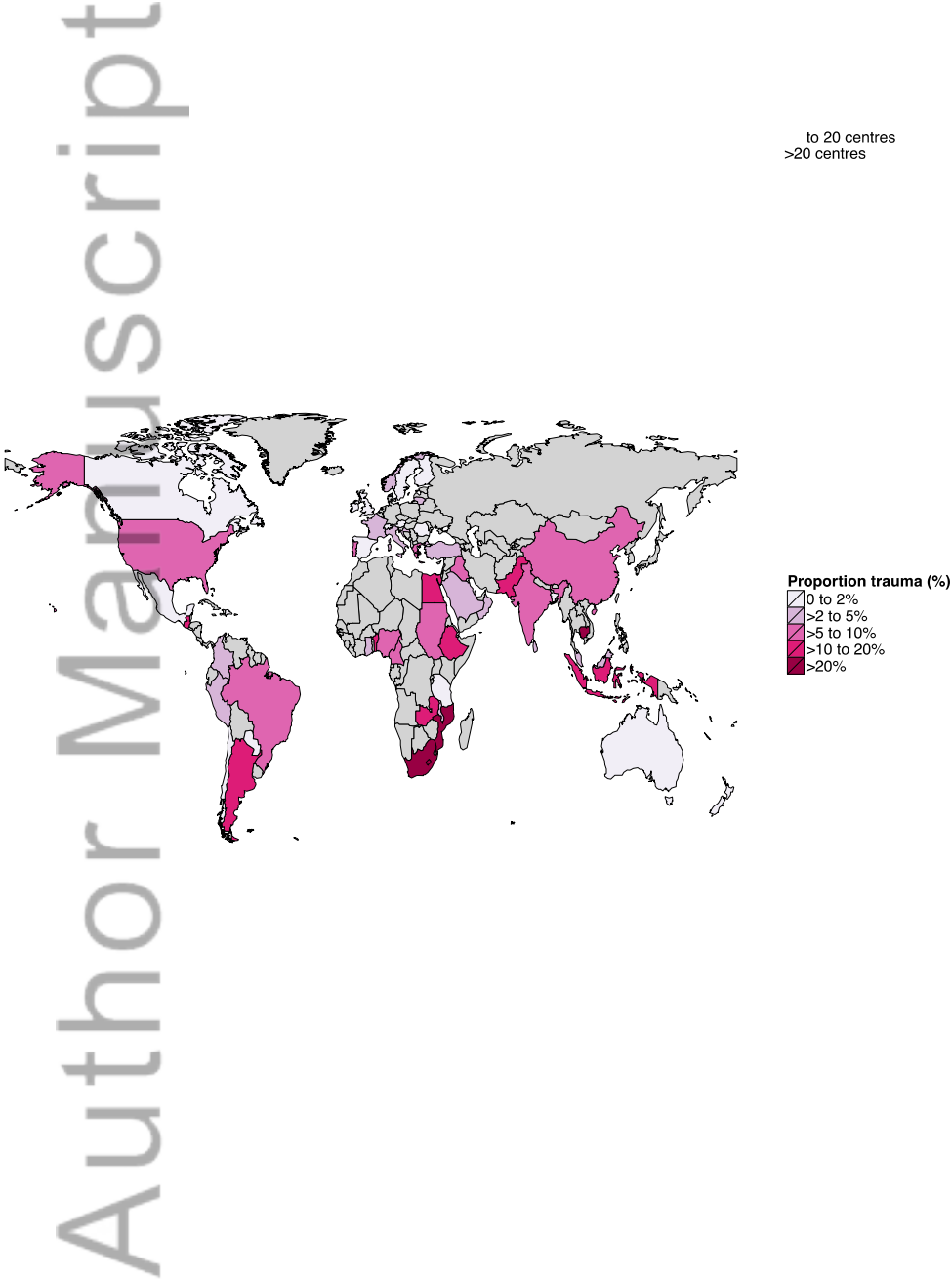
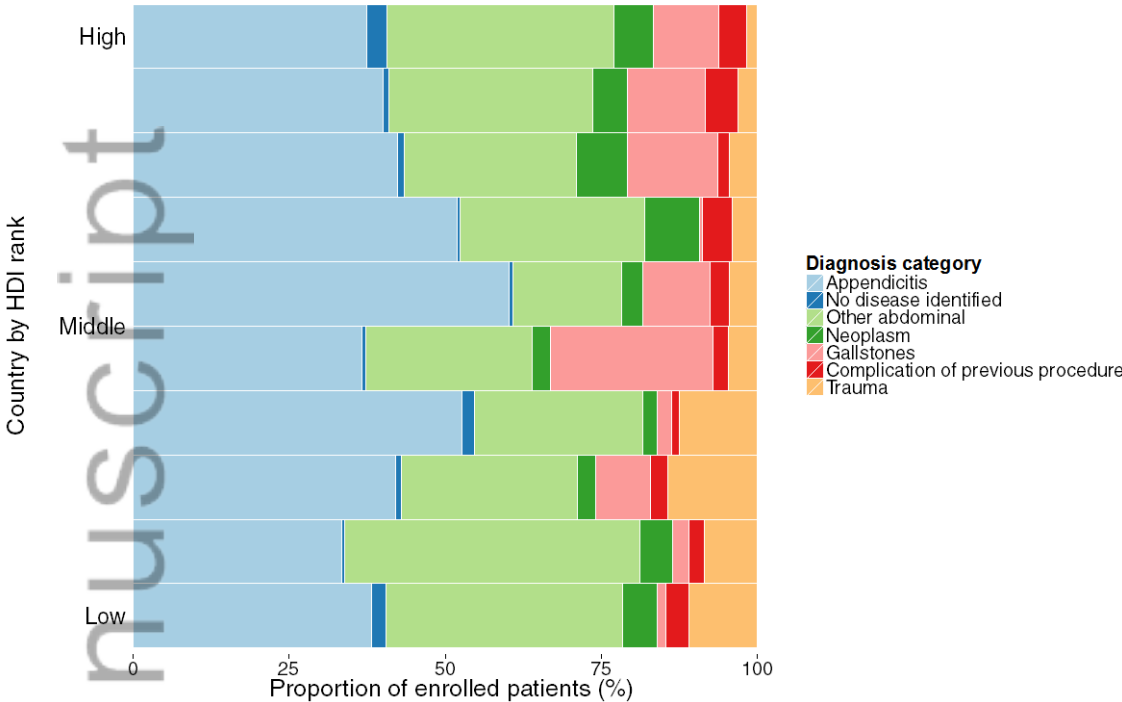
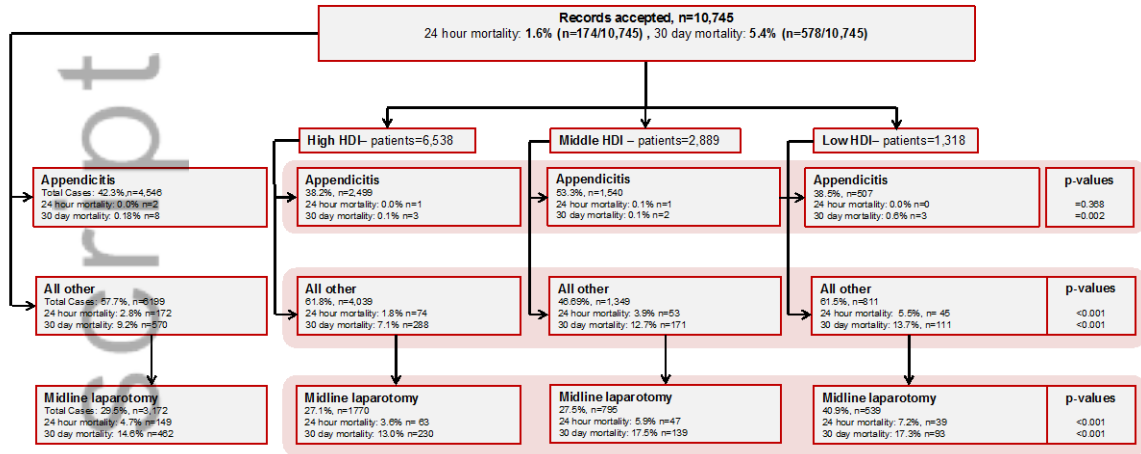


Fig 2: summary diagnostic groups. The coloured bars show the proportional diagnostic groups spread from low to high HDI decile.



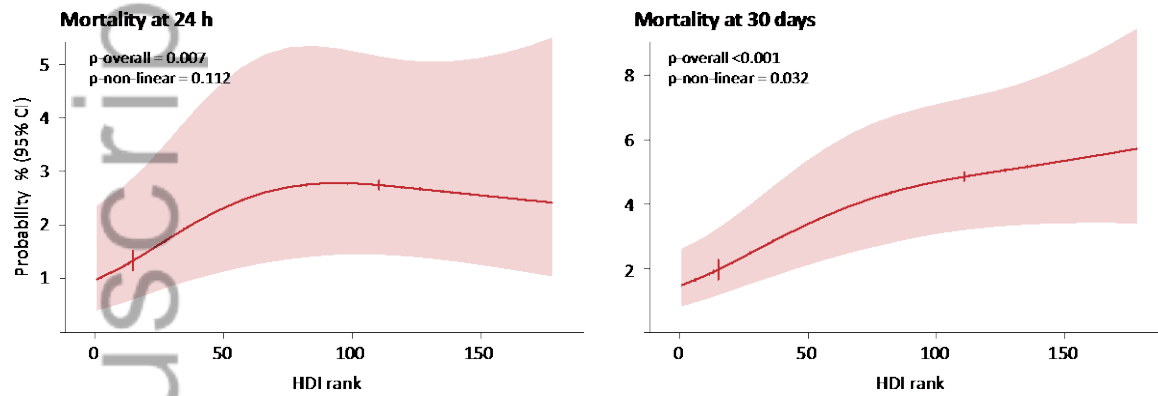
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Fig 3: Study process flowchart and key outcomes by Human Development Index.



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Fig 4: Adjusted associations between human developmental index (HDI) rank and mortality. Multivariable logistic regression models were repeated but using a continuous variable of HDI rank. A restricted cubic spline with three knots distributed equally across the range was applied to HDI rank. Predictions were made on the models and 95% confidence intervals determined (shaded area). Covariate levels, age=35, diabetes=no, gender=male, smoking=no, ASA=1, diagnosis=trauma, checklist=no, not available.



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Collaborators, Contributions and Acknowledgments

Writing Group: Aneel Bhangu (Overall Guarantor), J Edward F Fitzgerald, Adesoji O Ademuyiwa, Gustavo Recinos, Chetan Khatri, James C Glasbey, Thomas M Drake, Midhun Mohan, Richard Lilford, Kjetil Søreide, Ewen M Harrison (Statistical Guarantor), on behalf of the *GlobalSurg Collaborative*

Protocol: Aneel Bhangu, J Edward F Fitzgerald, Stuart Fergusson, Chetan Khatri, Hampus Holmer, Kjetil Søreide, Ewen M Harrison.

Statistical Analysis: Ewen M Harrison, Thomas M Drake, Aneel Bhangu.

National Leads: These individuals were involved in recruitment of multiple centres (in some cases all centres) from the countries listed. Chetan Khatri (Lead Coordinator for GlobalSurg), Neel Gobin (Australia), Ana Vega Freitas (Brazil), Nigel Hall (Canada), Sung-Hee Kim (China, Hong Kong), Ahmed Negeida, Hosni Khairy (Egypt), Zahra Jaffry (England) Stephen J Chapman (England), Alexis P Arnaud (France), Stephen Tabiri (Ghana), Gustavo Recinos (Guatemala), Cutting Edge Manipal, Midhun Mohan (India), Radhian Amandito (Indonesia), Marwan Shawki (Iraq), Michael Hanrahan (Ireland), Francesco Pata (Italy), Justas Zilinskas (Lithuania), April Camilla Roslani, Cheng Chun Goh (Malaysia), Adesoji O Ademuyiwa (Nigeria), Gareth Irwin (Northern Ireland), Sebastian Shu, Laura Luque (Peru), Hunain Shiwani, Afnan Altamimi, Mohammed Ubaid Alsaggaf (Saudi Arabia), Stuart Fergusson (Scotland), Richard Spence, Sarah Rayne (South Africa), Jenifa Jeyakumar (Sri Lanka), Yucel Cengiz (Sweden), Dmitri A Raptis (Switzerland), James C Glasbey (Wales).

Collaborators

Argentina: Claudio Fermani, Ruben Balmaceda, Maria Marta Modolo (Hospital Luis Lagomaggiore).

Australia: Ewan Macdermid, Neel Gobin, Roxanne Chenn, Cheryl Ou Yong, Michael Edey (Blacktown Hospital), Martin Jarmin, Scott K D'amours, Dushyant Iyer (Liverpool Hospital, The University Of New South Wales), Daniel Youssef, Nicholas Phillips, Jason Brown (Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital), Robert George, Cherry Koh, Oliver Warren (The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Australia), Isaac Hanley (The Tweed Hospital), Marilla Dickfos (Toowoomba Hospital).

Austria: Clemens Nawara, Dietmar Öfner, Florian Primavesi (Department Of Surgery, Paracelsus Medical University Salzburg).

Bangladesh: Ashrarur Rahman Mitul, Khalid Mahmud (Dhaka Shishu (Children) Hospital), Margub Hussain, Hafiz Hakim, Tapan Kumar (Dhaka Medical College Hospital), Antje Oosterkamp (Lamb Hospital).

Benin: Pamphile A Assouto, Ismail Lawani, Yacoubou Imorou Souaibou (Centre National Hospitalier Et Universitaire Hubert Koutoukou Maga).

Brunei: Aung Kyaw Tun, Chean Leung Chong, (Pmmpmhamb Hospital) Giridhar H Devadasar, Chean Leung Chong, Muhammad Rashid Minhas Qadir, (Ssb Hospital), Kyaw Phyo Aung, Lee Shi Yeo, Chean Leung Chong (Ripas Hospital).

Brazil: Vanessa Dina Palomino Castillo, Monique Moron Munhoz, Gisele Moreira (Conjunto Hospitalar De Sorocaba), Luiz Carlos Barros De Castro Segundo, Salim Anderson Khouri Ferreira, Maíra Cassa Careta (Hospital Da Santa Casa De Misericórdia De Vitória), Stella Binna Kim, Alexandre Venancio De Sousa, Alyne Daltri Lazzarini Cury (Hospital De Caridade Sãofo De

Paula), Gustavo Peixoto Soares Miguel, Ana Vega Carreiro De Freitas, Barbara Pereira Silvestre (Hospital Estadual Doutor Jayme Dos Santos Neves), Julia Guasti Pinto Vianna, Carolina Oliveira Felipe, Luis Alberto Valente Laufer (Hospital Estadual Doutor Jayme Santos Neves), Fernanda Altoe, Luana Ayres Da Silva, Marina Luiza Pimenta, Thiago Fernandes Giuriato, Paulo Alves Bezerra Moraes, Jessica Souza Luiz (Hospital Estadual Dr Jayme Santos Neves), Rafael Araujo, Juliana Menegussi, Marisa Leal, Caio Vinícius Barroso de Lima, Luiza Sarmento Tatagiba, Antônio Leal (Hospital Infantil Nosa Senhora Da Gloria), Diogo Vinicius dos Santos, Gustavo Pereira Fraga, Romeo Lages Simoes (Hospital De Clinicas, University Of Campinas).

Cambodia: Simon Stock (World Mate Emergency Hospital).

Cameroon: Samuel Nigo, Juana Kabba, Tagang Ebogo Ngwa, James Brown (Mbingo Baptist Hospital).

Canada: Sebastian King, Augusto Zani, Georges Azzie, Mohammed Firdouse, Sameer Kushwaha, Arnav Agarwal (The Hospital For Sick Children), Karen Bailey, Brian Cameron, Michael Livingston (McMaster Children's Hospital), Alexandre Horobjowsky, Dan L Deckelbaum, Tarek Razek (Centre for Global Surgery, McGill University Health Centre).

Chile: Boris Marinkovic, Eugenio Grasset, Nicole D'aguzan (Hospital Del Salvador), Eugenio Grasset, Julio Jimenez, Roberto Macchiavello (Hospital Luis Tisne).

China: Zhongtao Zhang, Wei Guo, Junyeong Oh, Fei Zheng (Beijing Friendship Hospital).

Colombia: Irene Montes, Sebastian Sierra, Manuela Mendez (Clinica Ces), Maria Isabel Villegas, Maria Clara Mendoza Arango, Ivan Mendoza, (Clinica Las Vegas), Fred Alexander Naranjo Aristizábal, Jaime Andres Montoya Botero, Victor Manuel Quintero Riaza (Hospital Pablo Tobon Uribe), Jakeline Restrepo, Carlos Morales, Maria Clara Mendoza Arango (Hospital Universitario San Vicente Fundacion), Herman Cruz, Alejandro Munera, Maria Clara Mendoza Arango (Ips Universitaria Clinica Leon XIII).

Croatia: Robert Karlo, Edgar Domini, Jakov Mihanovic (Zadar General Hospital), Mihael Radic, Kresimir Zamarin, Nikica Pezelj (General Hospital Sibenik).

Dominican Republic: Manuel Hache-Marliere, Sylvia Batista Lemaire, Ruben Rivas (Cedimat - Centro De Diagnostico Medicina Avanzada, Laboratorio Y Telemedicina).

Egypt: Ahmed Khyrallah, Ahamed Hassan, Gamal Shimy, Mohamed A Baky Fahmy (Alazher University Hospital); Ayman Nabawi, Muhammad Saad Ali Muhammad Gohar, Mohamed Elfil, Mohamed Ghoneem, Muhammad El-Saied Ahmad Muhammad Gohar, Mohamed Asal, Mostafa Abdelkader, Mahmoud Gomah, Hayssam Rashwan, Mohamed Karkeet, Ahmed Gomaa (Alexandria Main University Hospital); Amr Hasan, Ahmed Elgebaly, Omar Azzam, Ahmad Abdel Fattah, Abdullah Gouda, Abd Elrahman Elshafay, Abdalla Gharib, Ahmed Menshawy, Mohammed Hanafy, Abdullah Al-Mallah, Mahmoud Abdulgawad, Mohamad Baheeg, Mohammed Alhendy, Ibrahim Abdel Fattah, Abdalla Kenibar, Omar Osman, Mostafa Gemeah, Ahmed Mohammed, Abdalrahman Adel, Ahmed Maher Menshawy Mesreb, Abdalla Gharib, Abdelrahman Mohammed, Abdelrahman Sayed, Mohamed Abozaid (Al-Husseini Hospital); Ahmed Hafez El-Badri Kotb, Ali Amin Ahmed Ata, Mohammed Nasr, Abdelrahman Alkammash, Mohammed Saeed, Nader Abd El Hamid, Attia Mohamed Attia, Ahmed Abd El Galeel, Eslam Elbanby, Khalid Salah El-Dien, Usama Hantour, Omar Alahmady, Billal Mansour, Amr Muhammad Elkorashy (Bab El-Shareia Hospital); Emad Mohamed Saeed Taha, Kholod Tarek Lasheen, Salma Said Elkolaly, Nehal Yosri Elsayed Abdel-Wahab, Mahmoud Ahmed Fathi Abozyed, Ahmed Adel, Ahmed Moustafa Saeed, Gehad

Samir El Sayed, Jihad Hassan Youssif (Banha University Hospital); Soliman Magdy Ahmed, Nermeen Soubhy El-Shahat, Abd El-Rahman Hegazy Khedr (Belbes Central Hospital); Abdelrhman Osama Elsebaaye, Mohamed Elzayat, Mohamed Abdelraheim, Ibrahim Elzayat, Mahmoud Warda, Khaled Naser El Deen, Abdelrhman Essam, Omar Salah, Mohamed Abbas, Mona Rashad, Ibrahim Elzayyat, Dalia Hameda, Gehad Tawfik, Mai Salama, Hazem Khaled, Mohamed Seisa, (El Dawly Hospital - Mansoura); Kareem Elshaer, Abdelfatah Hussein, Mahmoud Elkhadrabi (El Mahalla General Hospital); Ahmed Mohamed Afifi, Osama Saadeldeen Ebrahim, Mahmoud Mohamed Metwally (El - Mataria Educational Hospital); Rowida Elmelegy, Daa Moustafa Elbendary Elsawahly, Hisham Safa, Eman Nofal, Mohamed Elbermawy, Metwally Abo Raya, Ahmed Abdelmotaleb Ghazy, Hisham Samih, Asmaa Abdelgelil, Sarah Abdelghany, Ahmed El Kholy, Metwally Aboraya, Fatma Elkady, Mahmoud Salma, Sarah Samy, Reem Fakher, Aya Aboarab, Ahmed Samir, Ahmed Sakr, Abdelrahman Haroun, Asmaa Abdel-Rahman Al-Aarag, Ahmed Elkholy, Sally Elshanwany (El-Menshawy Hospital); Esraa Ghanem (Elshohadaa Central Hospital); Ahmed Tammam, Ali Mohamed Hammad, Yousra El Shoura, Gehad El Ashal, Hosni Khairy (Kasr Alainy School Of Medicine); Sarah Antar, Sara Mehrez, Mahmoud Abdelshafy, Maha Gamal Mohamad Hamad, Mona Farid Hosh, Emad Abdallah, Basma Magdy, Thuraya Alzayat, Elsayed Gamaly, Hossam Elfeki, Amany Abouzahra, Shereen Elsheikh, Fatimah Elgendy (Mansoura University Hospitals); Fathia Abd El-Salam, Osama Seifelnasr, Mohamed Ammar, Athar Eysa, Aliaa Sadek, Aliaa Gamal Toeema, Karim Shady, Aly Nasr, Mohamed Abuseif, Hagar Zidan, Sara Abd Elmageed Barakat, Nadin Elsayed, Yasmin Abd Elrasoul, Ahmed El-Kelany, Ahmed Elkelany, Mohamed Sabry Ammar, Mennat-Allah Mustafa, Yasmin Makhlof, Mohamed Etman, Samar Saad, Mahmoud Alrahawy, Ahmed Raslan, Mahmoud Morsi, Ahmed Rslan, Ahmed Sabry, Hager Elwakil, Heba Shaker, Hagar Zidan, Yasmin Abd-Elrasoul, Ahmed Elkelany (Menoufia University Hospitals); Hussein El-Kashef, Mohamed Shaalan, Areej Tarek (Minia University Hospital); Ayman Elwan, Ahmed Ragab Nayel, Mostafa Seif, Ayman Elwan, Doaa Emadeldin Shafik, Mohamed Ali Ghoname, Ahmad Almallah, Ahmed Fouad, Ayman Elwan, Eman Adel Sayma (New Damietta University Hospital); Ahmad Elbatahgy, Angham Solaiman El-Ma'doul, Ahmed Mosad, Hager Tolba, Daa Eldin Abdelazeem Amin Elsorogy, Hassan Ali Mostafa, Amira Atef Omar, Ola Sherief Abd El Hameed, Ahmed Lasheen (Quweisna Central Hospital In Quweisna); Yasser Abd El Salam, Ashraf Morsi, Mohammed Ismail (Ras El Tin General Hospital); Hager Ahmed, Mohamed Amer, Ahmed Elkelany, Ahmed Elkelany, Ahmed Sabry El-Hamouly, Noura Attallah, Omnia Mosalum, Ahmed Afandy, Ahmed Mokhtar, Alaa Abouelnasr, Sara Ayad, Ramdan Shaker, Rokia Sakr, Ramadan Shaker, Mahmoud Amreia, Soaad Elsobky, Mohamed Mustafa, Ahmed Abo El Magd, Abeer Marey, Amr Tarek, Mohamed Fadel (Shebin Elkom Teaching Hospital, Menoufia); Mohamed Moamen Mohamed, Amr Fadel, Emad Ali Ahmed (Sohag University Hospital); Ahmad Ali, Mohammad Ghassan Alwafai, Ehab Abdulkader Hemida Ghazy Alnawam, Abdullah Dwydar, Sara Kharsa, Ehab Mamdouh, Hatem El-Sheemy, Ibrahim Alyoussef, Abouelatta Khairy Aly, Ahmad Aldalaq, Ehab Alnawam, Dalia Alkhabbaz (Souad Kafafi University Hospital); Mahmoud Saad, Shady Hussein, Ahmed Abo Elazayem, Ahmed Ramadan, Marwa Elashmawy, Mohammed Mousa, Ahmad Nashaat, Sara Ghanem, Zaynab Oof, Aya Elwaey, Iman Elkadsh (Suez Canal University Hospitals); Mariam Darweesh, Ahmed Mohameden, Mennaallah Hafez (Suez General Hospital); Ahmed Badr, Assmaa Badwy, Mohamed Abd El Slam (Talla Central Hospital); Mohamed Elazoul, Safwat Al-Nahrawi, Lotfy Eldamaty, Fathee Nada, Mohamed Ameen, Aya Hagar, Mohamed Elsehmy, Mohammad Abo-ryia, Hossam Dawoud, Shorouk El Mesery, Abeer El Gendy, Ahmed Abdelkareem, Ahmed Safwan Marey, Mostafa Allam, Sherif Shehata, Khaled Abozeid, Marwa Elshobary, Ahmed Fahiem, Sameh Sarsik, Amel Hashish, Mohamed Zidan, Mohamed Hashish,

Atia Sanad , Moemen Mesalam, Shaimaa Aql, Abdelaziz Osman Abdelaziz Elhendawy (Tanta University Hospital); Mohamed Hussein, Omar Khater, Esraa Abdalmageed Kasem, Ahmed Gheith, Yasmin Elfouly, Ahmed Ragab Soliman, Yasmein Hani, Nesma Elfouly, Ahmed Fawzy, Ahmed Hassan, Mohammad Rashid, Abdallah Salah Elsherbiny, Basem Sieda, Nermin Mohamed Badwi, Mohammed Mustafa Hassan Mohammed, Osama Mohamed, Mohammad Abdulkhalek Habeeb (Zagazig University Hospitals).

Ethiopia: Mengistu Worku, Nichole Starr (Dessie Referral Hospital), Semay Desta, Sahlu Wondimu, Nebyou Seyoum Abebe (Minilik li Hospital), Efeson Thomas, Frehun Ayele Asele, Daniel Dabessa (Myungung Christian Medical Center), Nebiyou Seyoum Abebe, Abebe Bekele Zerihun (Tikur Anbessa Hospital).

Finland: Panu Mentula, Ari Leppäniemi, Ville Sallinen (Helsinki University Central Hospital).

France: Aurelien Scalabre, Fernanda Frade, Sabine Irtan (Trousseau Hospital Sorbonnes Universités, Upmc Univ Paris), Vivien Graffaille, Elodie Gaignard, Quentin Alimi (Chu De Rennes), Quentin Alimi, Vivien Graffaille, Elodie Gaignard (Fr Rennes University), Olivier Abbo, Sofia Mouttalib, Ourdia Bouali (Hopital Des Enfants), Erik Hervieux, Yves Aigrain, Nathalie Botto (Hopital Necker Enfants Malades), Alice Faure, Lucile Fievet, Nicoleta Panait (Hopital Nord), Emilie Eyssartier, Françoise Schmitt, Guillaume Podevin (Pediatric Surgery Department, University Hospital Of Angers, France), Valentine Parent, Amandine Martin, Alexis Pierre Arnaud (Rennes University Hospital), Cecile Muller, Arnaud Bonnard, Matthieu Peycelon (Robert Debré Children University Hospital).

Ghana: Francis Abantanga, Kwaku Boakye-Yiadom, Mohammed Bukari (Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital), Frank Owusu (Offinso District Hospital), Joseph Awuku-Asabre, Stephen Tabiri, Lemuel Davies Bray (University For Development Studies, School Of Medicine And Health Sciences, General Surgery Department, Tamale Teaching Hospital).

Greece: Dimitrios Lytras, Kyriakos Psarianos, Anastasia Bamicha (Achillopouleio General Hospital Of Volos), Eirini Kefalidi (Attikon General Hospital), Georgios Gemenetzis (Attikon University Hospital), Christos Dervenis, Nikolaos Gouvas, Christos Agalianos (Konstantopouleio General Hospital Of Athens), Michail Kontos, Gregory Kouraklis, Dimitrios Karousos (Laiko University Hospital), Stylianos Germanos, Constantinos Marinos (Larissa General Hospital), Christos Anthoulakis, Nikolaos Nikoloudis, Nikolaos Mitroudīs (Serres General Hospital).

Guatemala: Gustavo Recinos, Sergio Estupinian, Walter Forno (Hospital De Accidentes Ceibal), José René Arévalo Azmitia (Hospital General De Enfermedades, Cirugia De Emergencia, Instituto Guatemalteco De Seguridad Social), Carla Cecilia Ramã-rez Cabrera (Hospital General De Enfermedades, Servicio De Cirugia Abdominal, Instituto Guatemalteco De Seguridad Social), Romeo Guevara, Maria Aguilera, Napoleon Mendez, Cesar Augusto Azmitia Mendizabal, Pablo Ramazzini, Mario Contreras Urquizu (Hospital General San Juan De Dios), Fernando Tale, Rafael Soley, Emanuel Barrios, Emmanuel Barrios (Hospital Juan Jose Arevalo Bermejo), Daniel Estuardo Marroquín Rodríguez, Carlos Iván Pérez Velásquez, Sara María Contreras Mérida (Hospital Regional De Retalhuleu), Francisco Regalado, Mario Lopez, Miguel Siguantay (Hospital Roosevelt, Guatemala).

Hong Kong: Fong Yee Lam, Kylie Joan-yi Szeto, Charing Cheuk Ling Szeto, Wing Sum Li, Kieran Ka Kei Li, Man Fung Leung, Tony Mak, Simon Ng (Prince of Wales Hospital).

India: SS Prasad, Anand Kirishnan, Nidhi Gyanchandani (KMC Hospital), Bylapudi Seshu Kumar, Muthukumar Ranganathan (Kovai Medical Centre & Hospital), Sriram Bhat, Anjana Sreedharan, S.V. Kinnera (Kasturba Medical College), Yella Reddy, Caranj Venugopal, Sunil Kumar (Pes Institute Of Medical Sciences & Research), Abhishek Mittal (Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi), Shruvan Nadkarni, Harish Neelamraju Lakshmi, Puneet Malik (Sawai Man Singh Medical College & Hospitals, Jaipur, Rajasthan), Neel Limaye, Srinivas Pai, Pratik Jain (Sdm College Of Medical Sciences And Hospital), Monty Khajanchi, Savni Satoskar, Rajeev Satoskar (Seth Gordhandas Sunderdas Medical College And King Edward Memorial Hospital), Abid Bin Mahamood (Travancore Medical College Hospital).

Indonesia: Eldaa Prisca Refianti Sutanto, Daniel Ardian Soeselo, Chintya Tedjaatmadja (Atmajaya Hospital), Fitriana Nur Rahmawati, Radhian Amandito, Maria Mayasari (Dr Cipto Mangunkusumo General Hospital, Jakarta).

Iraq: Ruqaya Kadhim Mohammed Jawad Al-Hasani, Hasan Ismael Ibraheem Al-Hameedi, Hasan Ismael Ibraheem, Israa Abdullah Aziz Al-Azraqi (Alsader Medical City), Lubna Sabeeh, Rahma Kamil, Marwan Shawki (Baghdad Medical City), Muwaffaq Mezeil Telfah (Department Of Surgery, College Of Medicine, University Of Mosul, Al-Jumhoori Teaching Hospital).

Ireland: Amoudtha Rasendran, Jacqueline Sheehan, Robert Kerley, Caoimhe Normile, Richard William Gilbert, Jiheon Song, Mohamed Dablouk, Linnea Mauro, Mohammed Osman Dablouk, Michael Hanrahan, Paul Kieley, Eleanor Marks (Cork University Hospital), Simon Gosling, Michelle McCarthy, Amoudtha Rasendran (Cork University Hospital & University College Cork), Diya Mirghani, Syed Altaf Naqvi, Chee Siong Wong (Limerick University Hospital), Siyi Chung, Reuban D'cruz, Ronan Cahill (Mater Misericordiae University Hospital), Simon George Gosling, Michelle McCarthy, Amoudtha Rasendran, Ciara Fahy, Jiheon Song, Michael Hanrahan, Diana Duarte Cadogan, Anna Powell, Richard Gilbert, Caroline Clifford, Caoimhe Normile, Aoife Driscoll (Mercy University Hospital), Stassen Paul, Chris Lee, Ross Bowe (Midlands Regional Hospital Mullingar), William Hutch, Michael Hanrahan (University College Cork), Helen Mohan, Maeve O'Neill, Kenneth Mealy (Wexford General Hospital).

Italy: Piergiorgio Danelli, Andrea Bondurri, Anna Maffioli (Azienda Ospedaliera Luigi Sacco - Polo Universitario), Mario Pasini, Giacomo Pata, Stefano Roncali (Azienda Ospedaliera Spedali Civili Di Brescia - Chirurgia Generale), Paolo Silvani, Michele Carlucci, Roberto Faccincani (Ircs Ospedale San Raffaele), Luigi Bonavina, Yuri Macchitella, Chiara Ceriani (University of Milan, IRCCS Policlinico San Donato), Gregorio Tugnoli, Salomone Di Saverio, Khaled Khattab (Maggiore Hospital), Miguel Angel Paludi, Domenica Pata, Luigi Maria Cloro (Nicola Giannettasio Hospital), Andrea Allegri, Luca Ansaloni, Federico Coccolini (Papa Giovanni Xxiii Hospital), Ezio Veronese, Luca Bortolasi, Alireza Hasheminia (San Bonifacio Hospital), Giacomo Natri, Massimiliano Dal Canto, Stefano Cucumazzo (Santa Croce Hospital), Francesco Pata, Angelo Benevento, Gaetano Tessera (Sant'Antonio Abate Hospital, Gallarate), Pier Paolo Grandinetti, Alessio Maniscalco, Giovanni Luca Lamanna (Santi Benvenuto E Rocco Hospital Asur), Luca Turati, Giovanni Sgroi, Emanuele Rausa (Treviglio Hospital), Roberta Villa, Michela Monteleone, David Merlini (Unita' Di Chirurgia D'urgenza Azienda Ospedaliera Salvini), Federico Coccolini, Luca Ansaloni, Andrea Allegri (Unit Of General Surgery I, Papa Giovanni Xxiii Hospital), Veronica Grassi, Roberto Cirocchi, Alban Cacurri (University Of Perugia).

Libya: Hamza Waleed, Ahmed Diab, Fathi Elzowawi (Misurata Central Hospital).

Lithuania: Mantas Jokubauskas, Karolis Varkalys, Donatas Venskutonis (Kaunas Clinical Hospital), Robertas Pranevicius, Viktorija Ambrozeviciute (Klaipeda Seaman Hospital), Simona Juciute, Austė Skardžiukaitė (Lietuvos Sveikatos Mokslų Universitetas), Donatas Venskutonis, Saulius Bradulskis, Linas Urbanavicius, Aiste Austraitė, Romualdas Riauka, Justas Zilinskas, Zilvinas Dambrauskas (Lithuanian University Of Health Sciences), Paulius Karumnas, Zigmantas Urniezius, Reda Zilinskiene (Republic Hospital Of Kaunas), Anele Rudzenskaite (Republic Hospital Of Panevezys), Ausrine Usaityte, Margarita Montrimaite, Nerijus Kaselis (Republic Klaipeda Hospital), Andrius Strazdas, Kristijonas Jokubonis (Stasys Kudirka Regional Hospital Of Alytus), Kornelija Maceviciute, Virgilijus Beisa, Tomas Poskus, Kestutis Strupas, Erikas Laugzemys (Vilnius University, Center Of Abdominal Surgery), Andrej Kolosov, Valdemaras Jotautas, Ignas Rakita (Vilnius University Hospital Santariskiu Clinics), Saulius Mikalauskas, Darius Kazanavicius, Rokas Rackauskas, Kestutis Strupas, Tomas Poskus, Virgilijus Beisa (Vilnius University Hospital Santariskiu Klinikos), Ritauras Rakauskas, Egle Preckailaite (Vsi Jonavos Ligonine).

Malawi: Ross Coomber, Kenneth Johnson, Jennifer Nowers (Queen Elizabeth Hospital).

Malaysia: Dineshwary Periasammy, Afizah Salleh, Andre Das (Hospital Kajang), Reuben Goh Ern Tze, Milaksh Nirumal Kumar, Nik Azim Nik Abdullah (Sarawak General Hospital), Nik Ritza Kosai, Mustafa Taher, Reynu Rajan (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Medical Centre), Hoong Yin Chong, April Camilla Roslani, Cheng Chun Goh (University Malaya Medical Centre).

Malta: Marija Agius, Elaine Borg, Maureen Bezzina, Roberta Bugeja, Martinique Vella-Baldacchino, Andrew Spina, Josephine Psaila (Mater Dei Hospital, Malta).

Martinique: Helene Francois-Coridon, Cecilia Tolg, Jean-Francois Colombani (Department Of Pediatric Surgery, Mother And Children's Hospital, University Hospital Of Martinique).

Mexico: Carmina Diaz-Zorrilla, Antonio Ramos-De La Medina, Samantha Corro-Diaz Gonzalez (Hospital Español de Veracruz).

Mozambique: Mário Jacobe, Domingos Mapasse, Elizabeth Snyder (Hospital Central Maputo).

New Zealand: Ramadan Oumer, Mohammed Osman (Whangarei Hospital, Northland District Health Board).

Nigeria: Aminu Mohammad, Lofty-John Anyanwu, Abdulrahman Sheshe (Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital), Alaba Adesina, Olubukola Faturoti, Ogechukwu Taiwo (Babcock University Teaching Hospital), Muhammad Habib Ibrahim, Abdulrasheed A Nasir, Siyaka Itopa Suleiman (Federal Medical Centre, Birnin Kebbi), Adewale Adeniyi, Opeoluwa Adesanya, Ademola Adebajo (Federal Medical Centre), Roland Osuoji, Kazeem Atobatele, Ayokunle Ogunyemi, Omolara Williams, Mobolaji Oludara, Olabode Oshodi (Lagos State University Teaching Hospital), Adesoji Ademuyiwa, AbdulRazzaq Oluwagbemiga Lawal, Felix Alakaloko, Olumide Elebute, Adedapo Osinowo, Christopher Bode (Lagos University Teaching Hospital), Abidemi Adesuyi (National Hospital Abuja), Adesoji Tade, Adeleke Adekoya, Collins Nwokoro (Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital), Omobolaji O Ayandipo, Taiwo Akeem Lawal, Akinlabi E Ajao (University College Hospital), Samuel Sani Ali, Babatunde Odeyemi, Samson Olori (University of Abuja Teaching Hospital), Ademola Popoola, Ademola Adeyeye, James Adeniran (University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital).

Norway: William J. Lossius (Department Of Gastrointestinal Surgery, St. Olavs Hospital, Trondheim University Hospital), Ingemar Havemann (Soerlandet Hospital Kristiansand), Kenneth

Thorsen, Jon Kristian Narvestad, Kjetil Soreide (Stavanger University Hospital), Trude Beate Wold, Linn Nymo (University Hospital Of North Norway, Troms).

Oman: Mohammed Elsidig, Manzoor Dar (Sohar Hospital).

Pakistan: Kamran Faisal Bhopal, Zainab Iftikhar, Muhammad Mohsin Furqan (Bahawal Victoria Hospital), Bakhtiar Nighat, Masood Jawaid, Abdul Khaliq (Dow University Hospital), Ahsan Zil-E-Ali, Anam Rashid (Fatima Memorial Hospital), Hasnain Abbas Dharamshi, Tahira Naqvi, Ahmad Faraz (Karachi Medical And Dental College, Abbasi Shaheed Hospital), Abdul Wahid Anwar, Tahir Muhammad Yaseen, Ghina Shamim Shamsi, Ghina Shamsi, Tahir Yaseen, Wahid Anwer (The Indus Hospital).

Paraguay: Horacio Paredes Decoud, Omar Aguilera, Ismael Isaac Zelada Alvarez, Juan Marcelo Delgado, Gustavo Miguel Machain Vega, Helmut Alfredo Segovia Lohse (Hospital De Clínicas).

Peru: Wendy Leslie Messa Aguilar, Jose Antonio Cabala Chiong, Ana Cecilia Manchego Bautista (Carlos Alberto Seguin Escobedo National Hospital. Essalud), Eduardo Huaman, Sergio Zegarra, Rony Camacho (Hospital Nacional Guillermo Almenara), Jose María Vergara Celis, Diego Alonso Romani Pozo (Hospital De Emergencias Pediatricas), José Hamasaki, Edilberto Temoche, Jaime Herrera-Matta (Hospital De Policia), Carla Pierina García Torres, Luis Miguel Alvarez Barrada, Ronald Renato Barrionuevo Ojeda (Hospital Goyeneche), Octavio Garaycochea (Hospital li -1 Minsa Moyobamba), Melanie Castro Mollo, Michelle Solange De Fã Tima Linares Delgado, Francisco Fujii (Hospital Maria Auxiliadora), Ana Cecilia Manchego Bautista, Wendy Leslie Messa Aguilar, Jose Antonio Cabala Chiong (Hospital Nacional Carlos Alberto Seguin), Susana Yrma Aranzabal Durand, Carlos Alejandro Arroyo Basto, Nelson Manuel Urbina Rojas (Hospital Nacional Edgardo Rebagliati Martins-Essalud), Sebastian Bernardo Shu Yip, Ana Lucia Contreras Vergara, Andrea Echevarria Rosas Moran, Giuliano Borda Luque, Manuel Rodriguez Castro, Ramon Alvarado Jaramillo (Hospital Nacional Cayetano Heredia), George Manrique Sila, Crislee Elizabeth Lopez, Mardelangel Zapata Ponze De Leon, Massiell Machaca, Ronald Coasaca Huaraya, Andy Arenas, Crislee López, Clara Milagros Herrera Puma, Wilfredo Pino, Christian Hinojosa, Melanie Zapata Ponze De Leon, Susan Limache, George Manrique Sila, Layza-Alejandra Mercado Rodriguez (Hospital Regional Honorio Delgado Espinoza).

Portugal: Renato Melo, Jose Costa-Maia, Nuno Muralha (Servico De Cirurgia Geral - Centro Hospitalar Sao Joao - Porto).

Reunion: Frederique Sauvat (Chu Reunion).

Romania: Ionasc Dan, Mircea Hoge, Pandi Eduard (Emergency Clinical Hospital Brasov), Razvan-Matei Bratu, Mircea Beuran, Ionut-Bogdan Diaconescu, Bogdan-Valeriu Martian, Florin-Mihail Iordache, Mihaela Vartic (Emergency Clinical Hospital Bucharest), Lucian Corneliu Vida, Liviu Iuliu Muntean, Aurel Sandu Mironescu (Spitalul Clinic De Copii Brasov).

Rwanda: Vizir Jean Paul Nsengimana (Chuk), Alice Niragire, Jean De La Croix Allen Ingabire, Eugene Niyirera (University Teaching Hospital Of Kigali).

San Marino: Nicola Zanini, Elio Jovine, Giovanni Landolfo (San Marino State Hospital).

Saudi Arabia: Ibrahim N. Alomar, Saleh A. Alnuqaydan, Abdulrahman M. Altwigr (Buraydah Central Hospital), Moayad Othman, Nohad Osman (Imam Abdulrahman Al Faisal Hospital), Enas Alqahtani (King Abdulaziz Hospital Al Ahsa National Guard), Mohammed Alzahrani, Rifan Alyami, Emad Aljohani (King Abdulaziz Medical City), Ibrahim Alhabli, Zaher Mikwar, Sultan Almualllem

(King Abdulaziz Medical City (King Khalid National Guard Hospital, Jeddah), Emad Aljohani, Rifan Alyami, Mohammed Alzahrani (King Abdulaziz Medical City, Riyadh), Abrar Nawawi, Mohamad Bakhaidar, Ashraf A. Maghrabi, Mohammed Alsaggaf, Murad Aljiffry, Abdulmalik Altaf, Ahmad Khoja, Alaa Habeebullah, Nouf Akeel (Department of Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia), Nashat Ghandora, Abdullah Almoflihi, Abdulmalik Huwait (King Fahad General Hospital), Abeer Al-shammari, Mashaal Al-Mousa (King Fahad Hospital), Masood Alghamdi, Walid Adham, Bandar Albeladi, Muayad Ahmed Alfarsi, Atif Mahdi, Saad Al Awwad (King Fahd Hospital), Afnan Altamimi, Thamer Nouh, Mazen Hassanain (King Khaled University Hospital, King Saud University), Salman Aldhafeeri, Nawal Sadig, Osama Algohary (King Khalid General Hospital), Mohammad Aledrisy, Ahmad Gudal, Ahmad Alrifai (King Khalid National Guard Hospital), Mohammed AlRowais, Amani Althwainy (Department of Surgery, King Saud University), Alaa Shabkha, Uthman Alamoudi, Mawaddah Alrajaji (National Guard Hospital), Basim Alghamdi, Saud Aljohani, Abdullah Daqeeq (Rcymc), Jubran J Al-Faifi (Security Forces Hospital).

South Africa: Vicky Jennings, Nyawira Ngayu, Rachel Moore (Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital), Victor Kong (Edendale Hospital), Hayden Kretzmann, Katie Connor, Daniel Nel (Frere Hospital), Colleen Sampson, Richard Spence, Eugenio Panieri (Groote Schuur), Sarah Rayne, Nosisa Sishuba (Helen Joseph Hospital, Department Of Surgery, University Of The Witwatersrand), Myint Tun, Albert Mohale Mphatsoe, Jo-Anne Carreira (Leratong Hospital), Ella Teasdale, Mark Wagener (Ngwelezana Hospital), Stefan Botes, Danelo Du Plessis (Rob Ferreira Hospital).

Spain: Fernando Fernandez-Bueno (Hospital Central De La Defensa Gomez Ulla), Jose Aguilar-Jimenez, Jose Andres Garcia-Marin (Hospital Morales Meseguer. Sms), Lorena Solar García, Luis Joaquín García Florez, Rubén Darío Arias Pacheco (Hospital San Agustín), Janet Pagnozzi, Jimmy Harold Jara Quezada, Jose Luis Rodicio, German Minguez, Raquel Rodríguez-Uría, Paul Ugalde, Camilo Lopez-Arevalo, Luis Barneo, Jessica Patricia Gonzales Stuva (Hospital Universitario Central De Asturias), Irene Ortega-Vazquez, Lorena Rodriguez, Norberto Herrera (Severo Ochoa University Hospital).

Sri Lanka: Prasad Pitigala Arachchi, Wanigasekara Senanayake Mudiyansele Kithsiri Janakantha Senanayake, Lalith Asanka Jayasooriya Jayasooriya Arachchige (Department Of General Surgery, Teaching Hospital Kandy), Sivasuriya Sivaganesh, Dulani Irusha Samaraweera, Vimalakanthan Thanusan (National Hospital Of Sri Lanka).

Sudan: Ahmed Elgaili Khalid Musa, Reem Mohammed Hassan Balila, Mohamed Awad Elkarim Hamad Mohamed (Ibrahim Malik Teaching Hospital), Hussein Ali, Hagir Zain Elabdin, Alaa Hassan (Jarash International Specialized Hospital), Sefeldin Mahdi, Hala Ahmed, Sahar Abdoun Ishag Idris (Khartoum Teaching Hospital), Makki Elsayed, Mohammed Elsayed, Mohamed Mahmoud (Omdurman Teaching Hospital).

Sweden: Magnus Boijesen, Per-Olof Lundgren (Capio St Goran Hospital), Ulf Gustafsson, Ali Kiasat (Danderyds Hospital), Fredrik Wogensen, Fredrik Wogensen, Emma Jurdell, Anders Thorell (Department Of Surgery, Ersta Hospital, Stockholm), Hildur Thorarinsdottir, Maria Utter (Helsingborgs Lasarett), Sami Martin Sundstrom (Hudiksvall Sjukhus), Cecilia Wredberg, Ann Kjellin (Karolinska Universitetssjukhuset), Johanna Nyberg, Bjorn Frisk (Skaraborg Hospital Skovde), Malin Sund, Linda Andersson, Ulf Gunnarsson (Department Of Surgical And Perioperative Sciences, Umea University and Umea University Hospital), Yücel Cengiz, Sandra Ahlqvist, Ida Björklund (Sundsvall Hospital) Hanna Royson, Per Weber (Vaexjoe Central

Hospital), Hans-Ivar Pahlsson, Eva Borin (Visby Hospital, Department Of Surgery), Maria Hjertberg (Vrinnevi Hospital), Hanna Royson, Per Weber (Vaxjo Central Hospital).

Switzerland: Roger Schmid, Debora Schivo, Vasileios Despotidis (Bürgerspital Solothurn), Stefan Breitenstein, Ralph F Staerke, Erik Schadde (Kantonsspital Winterthur), Fabian Deichsel, Alexandra Gerosa, Antonio Nocito (Kantonsspital Baden), Dimitri Aristotle Raptis, Barbara Mijuskovic, Markus Zuber, Lukas Eisner (Kantonsspital Olten), Swantje Kruspi, Katharina Beate Reinisch, Christin Schoewe (Kreisspital Fuer Das Freiamt Muri Ag), Allan Novak, Adrian F. Palma, Gerfried Teufelberger (Kreisspital Muri, Department Of Surgery).

Tanzania: Msafiri Kimaro, Rachel King (Mbalizi Christian Designated Hospital)

Turkey: Ali Zeynel Abidin Balkan, Mehmet Gumar, Mehmet Ali Yavuz (Harran University Research And Treatment Hospital), Ufuk Karabacak, Gokhan Lap, Bahar Busra Ozkan (Ondokuz Mayis University, Medical Faculty), Bahar Busra Ozkan, Murat Karakahya (Ordu University Training And Research Hospital).

United Kingdom: Ryan Adams, Robert Morton, Liam Henderson, Ruth Gratton, Keiran David Clement, Kate Yu-Ching Chang, David Mcnish, Ryan McIntosh, William Milligan (Aberdeen Royal Infirmary), Brendan Skelly, Hannah Anderson-Knight, Roger Lawther (Altnagelvin Area Hospital), Jemina Onimowo, Veereanna Shatkar, Shivane Tharmalingam (Barking, Havering And Redbridge University Hospitals Trust (Queens Hospital, Romford), Evelina Woin, Tessa Fautz, Oliver Ziff (Barnet General Hospital), Shiva Dindyal, Sam Arman, Shagorika Talukder, Sam Arman, Vijay Gadhvi, Shagorika Talukder (Basildon And Thurrock University Foundation Trust), Luen Shaun Chew, Jonathan Heath (Blackpool Victoria Teaching Hospitals), Natalie Blencowe, Sally Hallam, Katherine Gash (Bristol Royal Infirmary), Gurdeep Singh Mannu, Dimitris-Christos Zachariades, Ailsa Claire Snaith (Buckinghamshire NHS Trust), Thusitha Sampath Hettiarachchi, Arjun Nesaratnam, James Wheeler (Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust), Darragh McCullagh, Joshua Michael Clements, Ata Khan (Causeway Hospital), Foteini Koumpa, Christina Neophytou, Jessica Roth, Wai Cheong Soon, Mohammed Deputy, Ahmed Ahmed, Annelisse Ashton, Joe Vincent, Jack Almy, Taufiq Khan, John Lee Y Allen, Charlotte Jane McIntyre, Dominic Charles Marshall (Charing Cross Hospital, Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust), Mark Sykes, Nebil Behar, Harriet Jordan (Chelsea And Westminster Hospital), Yaseen Rajjoub, Thomas Sherman (Cheltenham General Hospital), Timothy White, Anna Watts, Rohan Ardley (Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust), Tan Arulampalam, Apar Shah, Damien Brown (Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust), Emma Blower, Paul Sutton, Konstantinos Gasteratos, Dale Vimalachandran (Countess Of Chester Hospital), Cathy Magee, Gareth Irwin, Andrew Mcguigan (Craigavon Area Hospital), Stephen Mcaleer, Clare Morgan (Daisy Hill Hospital), Sarah Braungart (Department Of Paediatric Surgery, Leeds General Infirmary), Kirsten Lafferty, Peter Labib, Andrei Tanase, Clodagh Mangan, Lillian Reza, Lillian Reza, Andrei Tanase, Clodagh Mangan (Derriford Hospital), Helen Woodward, Craig Gouldthorpe, Megan Turner (Diana Princess Of Wales Hospital), Jonathan R L Wild, Tom AM Malik, Victoria K Proctor (Doncaster Royal Infirmary NHS Foundation Trust), Kalon Hewage, James Davies (Dorset County Hospital), Andre Dubois, Sayed Sarwary, Ali Zardab, Alan Grant, Robert McIntyre (Dr Grays Hospital), Yogendra Praveen Mogan, Weiguang Ho, Bryon Frankie Hon Khi Chong (Dumfries And Galloway Royal Infirmary), Shirish Tewari, Gemma Humm, Eriberto Farinella (East And North Hertfordshire NHS Trust Lister Hospital) Nigel J Hall, Naomi J Wright, Christina P Major (Evelina Children's Hospital), Thelma Xerri, Phoebe De Bono, Jasim Amin, Mustafa Farhad, John F. Camilleri-Brennan, Andrew G N Robertson, Thelma Xerri, Joanna

Swann, James Richards, Jasim Amin, Aijaz Jabbar, Phoebe De Bono, Myranda Attard, Hannah Burns, Euan Macdonald, Matthew Baldacchino, Jennifer Skehan, Julian Camilleri-Brennan (Forth Valley Royal Hospital), Tom Falconer Hall, Madelaine Gimzewska, Greta Mclachlan (Frimley Park Hospital), Jamie Shah, James Giles (George Elliot Hospital), Selina Chiu, Beatrix Weber, Selina Man Yeng Chiu, Saskia Highcock (Gilbert Bain Hospital), Maleeha Hassan, William Beasley, Apostolos Vlachogiorgos, Stephen Dias, Geta Maharaj, Rosie Mcdonald (Glangwili General Hospital), Alisdair Macdonald, Paul Witherspoon, Alan Baird (Glasgow Southern General Hospital), Panchali Sarmah, Nikki Green, Haney Youssef (Good Hope Hospital), Kate Cross, Clare M Rees, Bernard Van Duren (Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Foundation Trust), Emma Upchurch (Great Western Hospital), Khurram Khan, Haytham Abudeeb, Ahmed Hammad (Hairmyres Hospital, NHS Lanarkshire), Sharad Karandikar, Doug Bowley, Ahmed Karim (Heart Of England Foundation Trust), Witold Chachulski, Liam Richardson, Giles Dawnay, Ben Thompson, Ajayesh Mistry, Aneel Bhangu, Millika Ghetia, Sudipta Roy, Ossama Al-Obaedi, Millika Ghetia, Kaustuv Das (Hereford County Hospital), Ash Prabhudesai, DM Cocker, Jessica Juliana Tan (Hillingdon Hospital), Robert Tyler, Filippo Di Franco, Shruti Ayyar (Hinchingsbrooke Hospital), Sayinthen Vivekanantham, Shyam Gokani (Imperial College London), Michael Gillespie, Katrin Gudlaugsdottir (Inverclyde Royal Hospital), Theodore Pezas, Chelise Currow, Matthew Young-Han Kim (Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust), Amerdip Birring, Joanne Edwards, Ased Ali, Suparna Das, Madan Jha, Kieran Atkinson (James Cook University Hospital), Joshua Luck, Thomas Fozard, Michael Puttick (John Radcliffe Hospital), Yahya Salama, Rohi Shah, Ahmad Aboelkassem Ibrahim, Hamdi Ebdewi, Gianpiero Gravante, Saleem El-Rabaa (Kettering General Hospital), Henry Nnajiuba, Rebecca Allott, Aman Bhargava (King George Hospital), Zoe Chan, Zaffar Hassan (Kings College Hospital), Misty Makinde, David Hemingway, Ramzana Dean, Alexander Boddy, Ahmed Aber, Vijay Patel (Leicester Royal Infirmary), Jehangirshaw Parakh (Leighton Hospital - Mid Cheshire NHS Foundation Trust), Sunil Parthiban (Lister Hospital), Harmony Kaur Ubhi, Simon-Peter Hosein (Luton And Dunstable Hospital), Simon Ward, Kamran Malik (Macclesfield District General Hospital), Leifa Jennings, Tom Newton, Mirna Alkhouri, Min Kyu Kang, Christopher Houlden, Jonathan Barry (Morrison Hospital), Imtanan Raza, Alistair Farquharson, Sanjeet Bhattacharya (NHS Ayrshire), William Milligan, Kate Chang, Liam Henderson (NHS Grampian), Michael S J Wilson, Yan Ning Neo, Ibrahim Ibrahim, Emily Chan, Fraser S Peck, Pei J Lim, Alexander S North, Rebecca Blundell, Adam Williamson (Ninewells Hospital, NHS), Dina Fouad, Ashish Minocha (Norfolk And Norwich University Hospital), Kathryn Mccarthy, Emma Court, Alice Chambers (North Bristol NHS Trust), Jenna Yee, Ji Chung Tham, Ceri Beaton (North Devon District Hospital), Una Walsh, Joseph Lockey, Salman Bokhari, Lara Howells, Megan Griffiths, Laura Yallop (Northwick Park Hospital), Shailinder Singh, Omar Nasher, Paul Jackson (Nottingham Children's Hospital At Queens Medical Centre Campus), Michael Puttick, Joshua Luck, Thomas Fozard (Oxford University Hospitals), Abdul Muiz Shariffuddin, Weng Chee Ho, Michael S J Wilson, Gurpreet Pabla (Perth Royal Infirmary), Saed Ramzi, Shady Zeidan, Jennifer Doughty (Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust), Sidhartha Sinha, Ross Davenport, Jason Lewis (Princess Alexandra Hospital), Leo Duffy, Elizabeth Mcaleer, Eleanor Williams (Princess Of Wales Hospital), Robin Som, Omar Javed (Queen Elizabeth Hospital Woolwich), Matthew Boal, Nicola Harrison, Habib Tafazal, Omar Javed, Tom Brogden, Ewen Griffiths (Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham) Rhalumi Daniel Obute, Thomas E Glover, David J Clark (Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn), Mohamed Boshnaq, Mansoor Akhtar, Pascale Capleton, Samer Doughan, Mohamed Rabie, Ismail Mohamed (Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospital), Duncan Samuel, Lauren Dickson, Matthew Kennedy, Eleanor Dempster, Emma Brown, Natalie Maple, Eimear Monaghan, Bernhard Wolf, Alicia Garland (Raigmore Hospital), Arthur Mcphee,

David Anderson, Robert Anderson (Royal Alexandria Hospital), Sarah Hassan, Paul Sutton, Dave Smith (Royal Bolton Hospital), Jonathan Lund, Catherine Boereboom, Jennifer Murphy, Gillian Tierney, Samson Tou (Royal Derby Hospital), Eleanor Franziska Zimmermann, Neil James Smart, Andrea Marie Warwick (Royal Devon And Exeter National Health Service Foundation Trust), Theodora Stasinou, Ian Daniels, Kim Findlay-Cooper (Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust), Stefan Mitrasinovic, Swayamjyoti Ray, Massimo Varcada, Rován D'souza Sharif Omara (Royal Free Hospital), Matthew Spurr, Lucienne Parkinson, Anthony Hanks (Royal Glamorgan Hospital), Jennifer Ma, Emily Abington, Meera Ramcharn, Gethin Williams (Royal Gwent Hospital), Joseph Winstanley, Ewan D. Kennedy, Emily NW Yeung (Royal Hospital For Sick Children), Stuart Fergusson, Catrin Jones, Stephen O'Neill, Shujing Jane Lim, Ignatius Liew, Hari Nair, Cameron Fairfield, Julia Oh, Samantha Koh, Andrew Wilson, Catherine Fairfield (Royal Infirmary Of Edinburgh), Delran Anandkumar, Ashok Kirupagaran, Timothy F Jones, Hew Dt Torrance, Alexander J Fowler, Charmilie Chandrakumar, Priyank Patel, Syed Faaz Ashraf, Sonam M. Lakhani, Aaron Lawson Mclean, Sonia Basson (Royal London Hospital), Jeremy Batt, Catriona Bowman, Michael Stoddart, Natasha Benons (Royal United Hospital Bath), Clare Mason, Rebecca Harrison, John Quayle (Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust), Tom Barker, Virginia Summerour, Edward Harper (Sandwell And West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust), Caroline Smith, Matthew Hampton (Sheffield Children's Hospital), Sophie K Pitt, Alex E Ward, Timothy O'Connor, Emily G Heywood, Thomas M Drake (Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust), Abeed Chowdhury, Sina Hossaini, Nicholas Fs Watson (Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust), Doug Mckechnie, Ayaan Farah, Anita Chun (Southend University Hospital), Hoey Koh, Grace Lim, Graham Sunderland (Southern General Hospital), Laura Gould, Alice Chambers (Southmead Hospital), P C Munipalle, H Rooney, D R L Browning (Southmead Hospital, North Bristol NHS Trust), Bernadette Pereira, Kristof Nemeth, (St Georges Healthcare NHS Trust), Emily Decker, Stefano Giuliani, Aly Shalaby (St.George's Healthcare NHS Trust And University), Shafaque Shaikh, Chern Yan Tan, Ebrahim Y A Palkhi (St. James's University Hospital), Aleksandra Szczap, Swathikan Chidambaram, Chee Yang Chen, Kavian Kulasabanathan, Srishti Chhabra (St Mary's Hospital), Elisabeth Kostov, Philippe Harbord, James Barnacle (St. Mary's Hospital), Madan Mohan Palliyil, Mina Zikry, Johnathan Porter, Charef Raslan, Mohammed Saeed, Shazia Hafiz, Niksa Soltani, Katie Baillie (Stockport NHS Foundation Trust), Priyanka Singh, Shailee Sheth, Kishen Patel, Mahry Khalili, Jeessoo Choi, Matthew Bengier (St Thomas' Hospital), Lucy Marples, Alastair Macfarlane, Ramesh Thurairaja (St. Thomas Hospital), Tamsin Boyce, Harriet Whewell, Elin Jones (The Royal Gwent Hospital), Francesca Th'ng, Nichola Robertson (The Royal Infirmary Of Edinburgh), Ahmad Mirza, Haroon Saeed, Simon Galloway (The University Hospital Of South Manchester), Gia Elena, Mohammad Afzal, Mohamed Zakir (United Lincolnshire Hospitals - Pilgrim Hospital), Peter Sodde, Charles Hand, Aiesha Sriram, Tamsyn Clark, Patrick Holton, Amy Livesey (University Hospital Coventry And Warwickshire), Yashashwi Sinha, Fahad Mujtaba Iqbal, Indervir Singh Bharj (University Hospital Of North Midlands), Adriana Rotundo, Cara Jenvey, Robert Slade (University Hospital Of North Staffordshire NHS Trust), David Golding, Samuel Haines, Ali Adel Ne'ma Abdullah, Thomas W Tilston, Dafydd Loughran, Danielle Donoghue, Lorenzo Giacci, Mohamed Ashur Sherif, Peter Harrison, Alethea Tang (University Hospital Of Wales), Deevia Kotecha (University Hospitals Leicester - Leicester Royal Infirmary), Mohamed Elshaer, Tomas Urbonas, Amjid Riaz, Annie Chapman, Parisha Acharya, Joseph Shalhoub (Watford General Hospital), Cathleen Grossart, David McMorran (Western General Hospital), Makhosini Mlotshwa, William Hawkins, Sofronis Loizides (Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust), Kandaswamy Krishna, Melanie Orchard, Chik Wai Ho (Weston General Hospital), Peter Thomson, Shahab Khan, Fiona Taylor, Jalak Shukla,

Emma Elizabeth Howie (Whipps Cross University Hospital), Linda Macdonald, Olusegun Komolafe, Neil McIntyre (Wishaw General Hospital), James Cragg, Jody Parker, Duncan Stewart (Wrexham Maelor Hospital), Luke Lintin, Julia Tracy, Tahir Farooq (Yeovil District Hospital).

United States: George Molina, Haytham Kaafarani, Laura Luque (Massachusetts General Hospital), Robel Beyene, Jack Sava, Mark Scott (Medstar Washington Hospital Center), Mamta Swaroop, Raelene Kennedy (Northwestern Memorial Hospital), Ijeoma A Azodo, Daithi Heffernan, Tristen Chun, Andrew Stephen (The Rhode Island Hospital), Melanie Sion, Michael S. Weinstein, Viren Punja (Thomas Jefferson University Hospital), Nikolay Bugaev, Monica Goodstein, Shadi Razmdjou (Tufts Medical Center), Eric Etchill, Juan Carlos Puyana, Matthew Kesinger (University of Pittsburgh Medical Center - Presbyterian Hospital), Lena Napolitano, Kathleen To, Mark Hemmila (University Of Michigan).

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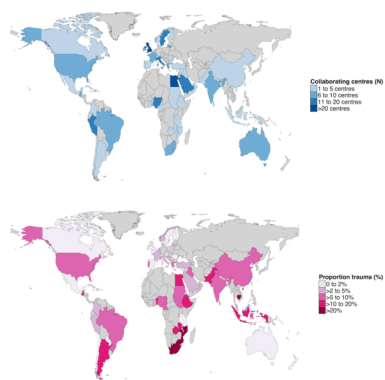


fig1.tiff

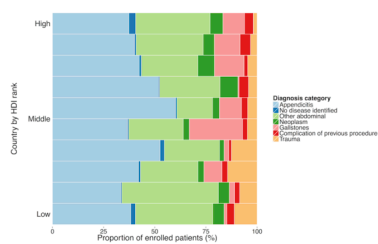


fig2.tiff

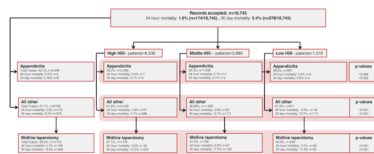


fig3.tiff

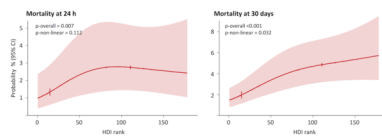


fig4.tiff