Too Few Cases, Too Little Confidence: A Needs Assessment of Pilonidal Flap Training in Military Surgery

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INTRODUCTION

- Pilonidal disease impacts 0.49% of the military compared to 0.026% of the civilian population.
- In the military, treating complex pilonidal disease is part of the general surgeon's practice especially when stationed overseas.
- Exposure to complex pilonidal disease surgical management of flap closures is limited during residency

HYPOTHESIS

- General surgery residents have limited exposure to flap closures for pilonidal disease both in and out of the operating room impacting confidence in performing the procedures independently.

REFERENCES

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2. Almajid FM, Alabdrabalnabi AA, Almulhim KA. The risk of recurrence of Pilonidal disease after surgical management. Saudi Med J. 2017 Jan;38(1):70-74. doi: 10.15537/smj.2017.1.15892. PMID: 28042633; PMCID: PMC5278068.

METHODS

- **Design**: Anonymous needs assessment survey
- **Subjects**: Residents at multiple military general surgery residency programs
- **Survey Content**
  - Demographics
  - Exposure to flap closures for pilonidal disease
  - Exposure to all types of flaps anywhere on the body
  - Knowledge of complex pilonidal closure
  - Confidence in performing flap closures
  - Barriers to feeling confident in performing flap closures
- **Analysis**
  - Short answer for barriers
  - Likert scale to assess confidence (1: not at all comfortable, 5: Extremely comfortable)
  - Short answer for recommendations on how to increase confidence

RESULTS

- 16 responses with all post-grad years represented

Figure 1: Number of Flaps Completed

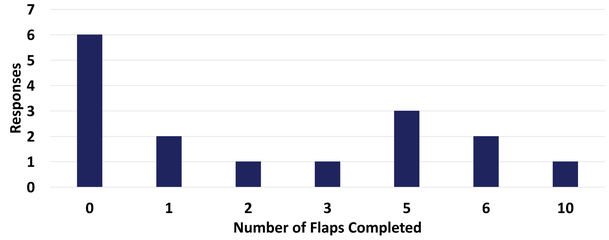


Figure 2: Number of Flaps Completed for Pilonidal Disease

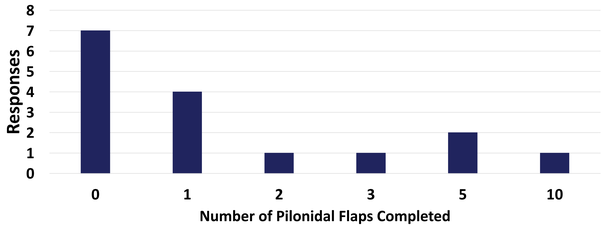
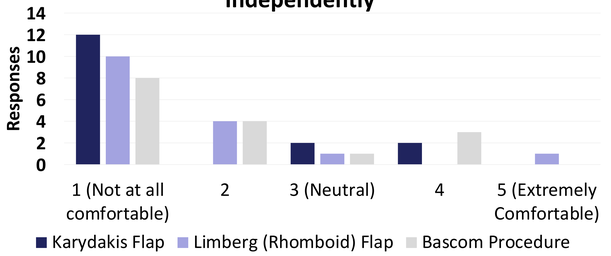


Figure 3: Confidence in Performing Operation Independently



DISCUSSION

- Residents report low confidence in their ability to perform multiple types of flap closures for complex pilonidal disease
- The most common barriers were attributed to low case volume and minimal didactic time spent on the topic
- Respondents believe training involving simulation would increase confidence i

CONCLUSION

- A curriculum is under development that includes a simulation and didactic portion
- The simulation uses a silicone buttocks model allowing residents to practice tissue rearrangement for each flap
- Through deliberate practice, the goal is to increase resident confidence with flap closures for pilonidal disease
- After implementation, the curriculum will be evaluated to determine its impact on resident confidence