

# Interhospital transfer

Delayed inter-hospital [transfers](#) of deteriorating [neurotrauma](#) patients from rural and [regional hospitals](#) to [Tertiary referral hospitals](#) have seen the need for non-neurosurgeons to undertake emergency intracranial haematoma evacuation surgery locally. In the present study, the authors contributed to the paucity in the literature regarding the widespread availability of [cranial access equipment](#) in non-tertiary centres and patient outcomes in Queensland.

**Methods:** We surveyed delegates (senior theatre nurses or surgical service directors) from rural and regional Queensland hospitals if they were located outside the local catchment of a tertiary centre and had a CT scanner. Questions regarded the availability, location and storage conditions of mechanical cranial access kits, as well as last usage, and associated patient outcomes.

**Results:** Twenty-six delegates from eligible hospitals responded. Eighteen hospitals offered surgical services. Eleven hospitals housed complete mechanical cranial access kits. Five hospitals housed incomplete kits. Thirteen hospitals housed their equipment sterile in the operating theatre or ED. Eleven hospitals reported using the equipment, with last usage ranging from 4 months to over 30 years. Two hospitals reported using the equipment within 12 months while a further five reported using it within 10 years. Two hospitals reported 'good' outcomes, two 'ok' and one 'poor'.

**Conclusions:** The availability of cranial access equipment outside Queensland tertiary centres has been limited. Inter-hospital transfers are likely to persist in Queensland and haematoma evacuation surgery has been a life-saving endeavour, so improving access to cranial access equipment in hospitals where it is currently lacking is highly warranted <sup>1)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>

Raman V, Maclachlan L, Redmond M. 'Burr holes in the bush': Clinician preparedness for undertaking emergency intracranial haematoma evacuation surgery in rural and regional Queensland. Emerg Med Australas. 2022 Nov 15. doi: 10.1111/1742-6723.14134. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 36379418.

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