

LABIAL ABSCESS, A PAINFUL WAIT

From the Emergency Department to the operating room

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Introduction

Bartholin and labial abscesses are a common gynaecological presentation to emergency departments (ED). Patients typically presenting with severe pain and labial swelling with management frequently including surgical drainage. Patients often endure a lengthy wait for ED and gynaecology review and subsequent surgical management.

Objective

The aim of this audit was to measure patient wait time from ED triage to surgical start time. Comparing standard referral pathway with the newly implemented direct referral pathway from ED to Acute Gynaecology Unit (AGU).

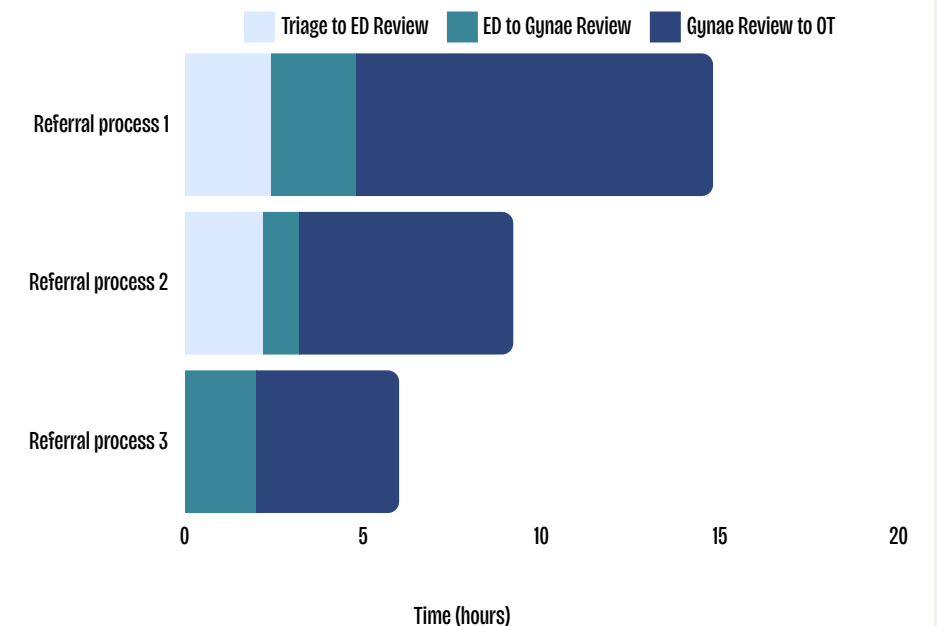
Methodology

Data from labial and Bartholin's abscesses that required surgical management at Gold Coast Health between January to December 2023 was reviewed. Data extracted including triage time, time to emergency and gynaecology Doctor review, and surgical start time, based on electronic documentation timestamp.

Results

There were 51 presentations for labial and Bartholin abscesses to Gold Coast Emergency department requiring surgical management between January and December 2023. Average wait for ED review and subsequent gynaecology review was over 5 hours with a further average time to theatre of 9 hours 43 minutes (referral process 1).

Through referral from ED doctors directly to AGU (Referral process 2), wait time for gynaecology review reduced to average of 3 hours 16mins. In referral process 3, ED triage referred directly to AGU, time to gynaecological review averaged 2 hours 9 mins, with a drastic reduction in time from ED triage to operating theatre of 6 hours 9 mins.



Graph 1: Comparison of referral methods for Labial abscess from emergency triage to operating start time.



Figure 1: Patient wait time reduction with referral process 3

62% reduction in patient wait time from ED triage to operation start time with direct ED to AGU referral

Conclusion

This audit highlights the benefit a dedicated referral pathway from Emergency Department to Acute Gynaecology Unit in reducing wait time for patients with labial abscesses. The Acute Gynaecology Unit has the scope to include direct referrals of other common minor gynaecological presentations to Emergency and further auditing of wait times would be of interest.