Surgical Care: A Cost-Effective Public Health Strategy

Surgical care represents a cost-effective and cross-cutting health service that is essential to treat and manage a broad range of conditions and disease categories, encompassing maternal and child health, trauma, non-communicable conditions such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease, and infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. According to the World Bank’s Disease Control Priorities Report, surgical procedures are among the most cost-effective of all health interventions in the developing world. For every $1 spent on strengthening local surgical capacity, $10 is generated through enhanced health and increased productivity. With nearly a third of the global burden of disease attributable to surgical conditions, universal health coverage is not feasible without the inclusion of safe surgical care.

WHAT IS NEEDED: THREE KEY ACTIONS

1. Include essential surgical and anaesthesia care within publically-financed health coverage
2. Invest in the scale-up of surgical services within national health systems
3. Monitor financial flows to surgical care to ensure accountability and transparency

INVESTING IN SURGERY

The total scale-up costs for 88 LMICs from 2012-2030 would be about $420 billion

There is a benefit-cost ratio of 10:1 for investment in essential surgery

CONSEQUENCES OF NOT INVESTING

Low- and middle-income countries that do not invest in surgical care are expected to experience GDP losses exceeding $12.3 trillion dollars by 2030

WHAT TO READ

A New Global Partnership

Read

Advocating for the neglected surgical patient
http://www.theg4alliance.org