

PAG Clinical Governance Report – For April 5, 2017

In a six month period, August 2016 to February 2017, there were 47 reported Incidents where the Pancreas was mentioned as one of the Key words. This is an increase compared with other recent 6 monthly periods – it was 26 in the previous period!

Because of inclusion in multi-organ retrieval, the pancreas crops up in Incidents such as “difficult behavior of retrieval surgeon” or “retrieval team did not bring enough ice (or bags)”, but there is clearly no direct relevance to the organ. But on careful analysis, 20 Incidents were clearly related to the Pancreas, which is double the number in the previous period.

Most of the incidents are relatively trivial – minor HLA discrepancies, an issue with the ODR, or transcription error of unimportant results or donor date of birth.

Retrieval issues were more numerous and significant than in the past.

There were 5 organs not transplanted because of retrieval damage, compared with just two in the previous period. In two cases, the problem was a large haematoma – these organs could not be used for islets. The other retrieval damage is not specified.

In addition, a pancreas, retrieved from a very unstable donor, was found to be thrombosed, and another organ was removed for the same reason at 12 hours post transplant. Finally, one organ was not used because complex anatomical considerations in the liver retrieval left inadequate vessels; this seemed to be a case of poor communication between donor team and recipient centre. In another case, the organ was not used because the splenic artery was short and there were no iliac vessels

One damaged pancreas – stitches in the duodenum, capsular avulsion and parenchymal tear, was used, but none of the damage was on the HTA form

There were some other, minor retrieval problems – absence, or inadequate labeling of spleen and lymph nodes, and in one case, a scalpel was found in the pancreas box!

The other 6 Incidents were minor. One related to a positive transport fluid culture with a non-fungal organism which did not need to be reported. Across the board, there is confusion about reporting positive cultures, and steps are being taken to clarify this issue

John Dark
April 2017