

INPLASY PROTOCOL

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Support: None.

Review Stage at time of this submission: Preliminary searches.

Conflicts of interest:
None declared.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education of neurosurgical trainees: a systematic review

Mavrovounis, G¹; Tzerefos, C²; Kalogeras, A³; Fountas, K⁴.

Review question / Objective: Did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the education (as defined by hands-on surgical experience, theoretical training, assignment to COVID-19 wards, working hours) of neurosurgical trainees worldwide?

Condition being studied: Neurosurgical education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligibility criteria: inclusion: studies of neurosurgery trainees, mention (with numbers) of how education was affected, during COVID-19 pandemic. exclusion: studies including other specialties, studies before COVID-19 pandemic, studies not-focussing on education.

INPLASY registration number: This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 23 March 2022 and was last updated on 23 March 2022 (registration number INPLASY202230125).

INTRODUCTION

Review question / Objective: Did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the education (as defined by hands-on surgical experience, theoretical training, assignment to COVID-19 wards, working hours) of neurosurgical trainees worldwide?

Condition being studied: Neurosurgical education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODS

Participant or population: Inclusion: Neurosurgical trainees at all levels of training, all countries. Exclusion: other specialties.

Intervention: Inclusion: Education of neurosurgical trainees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Exclusion: other specialties, prior to COVID-19 pandemic.

Comparator: Not applicable.

Study designs to be included: Included: observational studies, cross-sectional questionnaire studies, letters to the editor/short communication with original data. excluded: reviews, letters to the editor without original data, grey literature.

Eligibility criteria: Inclusion: studies of neurosurgery trainees, mention (with numbers) of how education was affected, during COVID-19 pandemic. exclusion: studies including other specialties, studies before COVID-19 pandemic, studies not-focussing on education.

Information sources: Databases: PubMed, Scopus, DOAJ; Only studies in English will be considered; Last literature search: 24/3/22.

Main outcome(s): 1. Reduction on hands-on experience? (+percentage).

Additional outcome(s): 1. Reduction on theoretical education? (+percentage); 2. Assigned to different department during the pandemic? (+duration); 3. Changes in working hours; 4. Changes in operating hours; 5. Solutions to solve the affected education; 6. Research exposure.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis: Two independent reviewers will perform quality assessment. Any disagreements will be resolved by discussion and when consensus cannot be reached a third investigator will be consulted. NIH quality assessment tool will be used for observational and cross-sectional studies.

Strategy of data synthesis: A formal meta-analysis is not planned. The data will be presented as identified in the included articles based on the aforementioned primary and additional outcomes.

Subgroup analysis: Not planned.

Sensitivity analysis: Not planned.

Country(ies) involved: Greece.

Keywords: education; neurosurgery; COVID-19.

Contributions of each author:

Author 1 - Christos Tzerefos.

Author 2 - Adamantios Kalogeras.

Author 3 - Georgios Mavrovounis.

Author 4 - Konstantinos Fountas.