

Trauma System in England: An Overview and Future Directions

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Abstract : Major trauma is a dynamic public health epidemic that is continuously evolving. Major trauma care services rely on multi-disciplinary team input involving highly trained pre and in-hospital critical care teams. Pre-hospital critical care teams (PHCCTs), major trauma centres (MTCs), trauma units, and rehabilitation facilities all form an efficient and organised trauma system. England comprises 27 MTCs funded by the National Health Service (NHS). Major trauma care entails enhanced resuscitation protocols coupled with the expertise of dedicated trauma teams and rapid radiological imaging to improve trauma outcomes. Literature reports a change in the demographic of major trauma as elderly patients (silver trauma) with injuries sustained from a fall of 2 metres or less commonly present to services. Evidence of an increasing population age with multiple comorbidities necessitates treatment within the first hour of injury (golden hour) to improve trauma survival outcomes. Staffing and funding pressures within the NHS have subsequently led to a shortfall of available physician-led PHCCTs. Thus, there is a strong emphasis on targeted research and funding to appropriately deploy resources to deprived areas. This review article will discuss the current English trauma system whilst critically appraising present challenges, identifying insufficiencies, and recommending aims for an improved future trauma system in England.

Keywords : trauma, orthopaedics, major trauma, trauma system, trauma network

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