Elective surgical services need to start planning for summer pressures

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Background & Aims

- Heatwaves will occur more frequently
- Elective services are prone to external pressures

**AIM:** Determine the impact of heatwaves on elective surgery in the UK

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**Summer 2022**

- 15-17 June
- 17-19 July
- 9-15 August
Methods

Frontline teams

17-19 July

? Impact

? Preparedness
Results

- 271 responses
- 140 hospitals in the UK
- 20 specialties

1 in 5 respondents
heatwave resulted directly in
cancellation of elective surgery

41%
Operating theatres unable to control ambient temperature
Results

Factors contributing to heatwave-related cancellations of elective surgery

- Staff shortages: 35.8%
- Unsafe theatre environment: 30.3%
- Beds shortage: 22.1%
- Increased ER workload: 11.4%
- Other: 4.4%
Implications to practice

- Planning before summer is needed
- Improvement of air-conditioning coverage
- Checklist for operating theatres during heatwaves
- Learning from other countries
Operating theatre heatwaves checklist

☑ Do you have a operating theatre heatwave plan?
   Who is responsible for overseeing this?

☑ Can your operating theatres function during heatwaves?
   Do ventilation systems need to be upgraded?
   Is any equipment at risk of overheating?

☑ Do you have a plan in case there are staff shortages?
   Is it feasible to have “backup” staff?

☑ If there is a heatwave-related surge in emergency admissions, can surgical activity be maintained?
   Ringfencing elective surgery beds, switching inpatient theatre lists to day-cases
Thank you

Questions?

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