



Z.S.O.G

ZIMBABWE SOCIETY OF OBSTETRICIANS & GYNAECOLOGISTS

DEBATE

**Who should primarily manage breast diseases
between General Surgeons and Gynecologists?**

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Who owns the breast in surgery?

- An age-old medical battle exists between general surgeons and gynaecologists on management of the breast.
- This primarily arises due to the differences in surgical training and specialization , healthcare system structures, and patient preferences.
- Though Gynecologists are trained to manage conditions affecting the female reproductive system, their training is more focused on procedures involving the pelvic organs.

Specialization and training

- General surgeons undergo extensive training in a wide range of surgical procedures, including those related to the breast, be it benign or malignant.
- Additional training opportunities such as breast surgery are increasingly being undertaken by general surgeons.
- This comprehensive surgical training enables them to perform complex breast surgeries such as mastectomies and breast reconstruction.
- General surgeon breast surgery procedures have higher success rates and lower complication rates compared to gynecologists. (*J. Ryan et al. 2023*)

Volumes and outcome

- General surgeons perform larger numbers of breast surgeries compared to gynecologists leading to greater proficiency.
- Higher procedural volumes are correlated with better outcomes especially breast cancer surgery. (*D. Lesniak, 2023*)
- Studies have demonstrated that patients treated by surgeons have lower local recurrence rates and improved survival outcomes. (*J. Ryan, 2023*)

Healthcare system's structure

- Our local system structure on specialization plays a major role on who should take care of which group of patients.
- Surgeons are considered the primary specialists for surgical interventions involving the breast be it in males or females, whilst gynecologists focus on female reproductive issues.
- This division of labor ensures that patients receive care from the appropriate specialty.

Multidisciplinary care

- General surgeons are more likely to be integrated into MDTs that include Oncologists, Radiologists and Pathologists.
- This integration facilitates comprehensive care planning and adherence to treatment protocols.
- Integration of care has been associated with improved survival and disease-free rates.

THANK YOU

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