



Position Statement:

Aftercare of Patients of Fly In Fly Out (FIFO) Orthopaedic Surgeons

Background

AOA provides high-quality specialist education, training and continuing professional development for Australian orthopaedic surgeons and is committed to ensuring the highest possible standard of orthopaedic care. AOA is the leading authority in the provision of orthopaedic information to the community and actively supports orthopaedic related scientific research.

FIFO Orthopaedic Surgeons

AOA believes that the ideal orthopaedic care model is to have care provided by orthopaedic surgeons who reside within the local area.

AOA recognises that in some rural and remote areas orthopaedic surgeons may provide a valuable local service to those patients who would otherwise need to travel considerable distances out of their immediate area for orthopaedic care. It would be expected that if local surgeons were already providing such a service, or if there are surgeons wanting to relocate to the local area that a FIFO service would not be appropriate.

Immediate Post-operative Care

The FIFO orthopaedic surgeon must ensure that they provide adequate post-operative care. This level of care must be no less than the level of care provided to all their patients who are not rural or remote. It would be expected that the operating surgeon would remain in the town following the surgery unless specific local orthopaedic care has been arranged and all the healthcare team involved in the patient's post-operative care are aware of and in agreement with, those specific arrangements.

The FIFO must ensure that appropriate local medical support is available and documented arrangements are in place if they are not physically present in the town to treat any complication that may arise before establishing a FIFO service.

Patient Selection

Patients with particular risks and comorbidities may not be suitable for surgery in

a FIFO location. It is the responsibility of the FIFO surgeon to ensure any proposed surgery is in line with the clinical services role delineation of the hospital.

Patients and all members of the health care team must be made aware of, and be in agreement with, the post-operative care arrangements.

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