SURGICAL AND REHABILITATION INTERVENTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE

Antony Duttine & Dr James Gosney Jr
Handicap International
San Juan, Puerto Rico
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Reminder of the Haiti earthquake

- Richter scale magnitude 7.0 earthquake
- 222,570 deaths and 300,572 injuries (OCHA).
- Over 600 agencies responded in first month (PAHO)

Excessively high amputation rate reported in media – criticisms of response
Study on the humanitarian response:

Aims:

• Review surgical response in relation to amputations

• Links to rehabilitation services

• Implications for response to future disasters and responses
Methodology

- Quantitative data element:
  - Statistical data from surgical organizations
  - HI/CBM/SEIPH database

- Qualitative data:
  - 83 semi-structured interviews
  - Local interviewer
Findings: Surgery

- Variation in amputation rates
- Lack/inconsistency of medical record keeping
- Day 2: population rumours
- Day 5: amputation peak

average amputation rate = 14%

BUT
range = <1% to 46%
Findings: Rehab

- Surgery to rehab limited pathways:
  - Community and self referrals

- Amputees only a fraction of total rehab clients:
  - Orthotic vs. prosthetic requirements

- Prosthetic “shopping around”
Implications and conclusions

• Rehab and surgical sectors showed evidence of excellent practices individually. BUT
  • Needs to be better coordinated
  • Integrated trauma care pathways

• Medical record keeping reinforcement

• Proportionalise not sensationalise
Questions for the ISPRM…

- How to advocate and achieve a multidisciplinary approach
- How to ensure all actors are aware of protocols and standards…
- How to practically facilitate medical communication in the chaos of disaster…