Report on Survey of Head and Neck Surgical Cancellations for major cases

There were 39 responses (thank you).

- 23 responses were from Head and Neck Surgeons
- 19 responses were from surgeons who, regularly, undertake major resections
- The respondents considered, approximately, 3600 cases that had been assessed through their H&N MDTs’ in a year
- 50 cases were cancelled/postponed due to lack of ITU bed
- 1 case was cancelled due to lack of anaesthetic staff
- Nationally great efforts are taken to prevent any cancellations/postponements. Some units have dedicated management staff to plan bed requirements.
- One unit does not use ITU, routinely, for flap/laryngectomy cases

Comment/thoughts

This confirms difficulty on availability of ITU beds.

Anaesthetist availability does not seem to be a problem!

I commend individuals to continue to find good safe local answers to this difficult problem. Local improvement may involve management staff dedicated to bed planning or considering the exact support required for a major head and neck resection patient other than an ITU bed.

Brian Bingham
Past-president ENT UK