

Abortions-government hospitals Peninsular Malaysia 1960-1972

BY

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This paper presents a study of the admissions and deaths of all cases of abortions admitted to the Government Hospitals of Peninsular Malaysia from the years 1960 – 1972. Peninsular Malaysia has eleven states and in each state there is one large metropolitan type General Hospital, a number of small Hospitals General or District type, main health centers, Sub-health centers and Midwives centers. With this excellent intra structure of health services, the problem cases are easily referred to a District or General Hospital for treatment. Surgical procedures like evacuation of the uterus in spontaneous incomplete abortions, inevitable abortions, missed abortions or septic incomplete abortions were only carried out at the District or General Hospitals.

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TABLE I.
YEAR/SPONTANEOUS ABORTION ADMISSIONS/STATES

YEAR	PERLIS	KEDAH	PENANG	PERAK	SELANGOR	NEGERI SEMBILAN	MALACCA	JOHORE	PAHANG	TRENGGANU	KELANTAN	TOTAL
1960	63	790	1162	1910	1216	738	485	1051	376	130	197	8118
1961	61	800	1296	1688	1470	745	489	1089	384	187	253	8389
1962	146	971	927	1982	1496	1053	476	1090	440	129	221	8931
1963	197	1044	1055	2112	1089	1092	576	1268	523	199	230	9393
1964	156	1075	977	2263	N.A.	1150	616	1369	592	201	186	8591
1965	73	1004	1062	2361	N.A.	1022	663	1812	573	182	3115	6067
1966	59	856	937	2128	N.A.	757	675	1770	514	232	363	8291
1967	140	804	934	2099	2091	887	700	1853	555	229	350	10672
1968	193	990	1144	2028	2200	905	657	1779	681	227	287	11111
1969	197	981	1141	2062	2063	890	672	2076	657	167	374	11280
1970	198	942	1176	2198	2346	991	686	2114	740	177	489	11977
1971	187	997	1269	2468	2462	971	631	2188	728	230	459	12489
1972	200	1296	1245	2541	2565	1090	531	2533	892	271	501	13665

Table I showed that although there was an increase in the number of spontaneous abortions from 8118 in 1960 to 13665 in 1972, the states with the highest abortions were Selangor, Perak and Johore, and the states with lowest abortion admission were Malacca, Trengganu, Kelantan and Perlis. The table also showed that all the states registered an increase in Hospital admissions for spontaneous abortions.

TABLE II.
YEAR/HOSPITAL ABORTION DEATHS/STATES.

YEAR	PERLIS	KEDAH	PENANG	PERAK	SELANGOR	NEGERI SEMBILAN	MALACCA	JOHORE	PAHANG	TRENGGANU	KELANTAN	TOTAL
1960	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	8
1961	0	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	7
1962	0	3	3	2	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	15
1963	0	1	2	3	0	3	1	1	1	0	1	13
1964	0	0	1	0	NA	0	0	2	0	3	0	6
1965	0	2	1	4	NA	0	0	1	2	0	1	11
1966	0	2	0	0	NA	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
1967	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	4
1968	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5
1969	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	7
1970	0	4	0	1	0	0	4	7	1	0	0	17
1971	0	0	0	3	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	11
1972	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	4
1	0	16	12	17	7	15	9	20	8	5	3	112

Table II showed that there was a fall in the number of deaths for cases of spontaneous abortions. The states with the highest deaths were Johore, Perak and Kedah.

TABLE III.
SEPTIC ABORTIONS - HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS.
YEAR/ HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS OF SEPTIC ABORTIONS/STATES

YEAR	PERLIS	KEDAH	PENANG	PERAK	SELANGOR	NEGERI SEMBILAN	MALACCA	JOHORE	PAHANG	TRENGGANU	KELANTAN	TOTAL
1960	16	34	61	44	181	58	37	135	2	17	21	606
1961	35	44	44	97	173	64	48	349	2	15	11	882
1962	64	96	222	92	100	17	23	381	5	29	33	1062
1963	62	76	72	113	73	24	11	416	8	26	86	967
1964	109	48	111	221	N.A.	30	23	486	12	18	49	1100
1965	7	45	72	147	N.A.	52	21	323	110	35	59	774
1966	5	43	56	248	N.A.	59	17	38	8	10	55	539
1967	11	31	337	262	164	74	24	47	21	7	14	689
1968	16	51	76	330	189	24	15	53	23	13	28	818
1969	12	28	64	290	191	36	24	82	17	3	17	764
1970	11	75	94	245	157	96	24	63	16	22	11	814
1971	1	10	106	351	125	16	13	70	6	39	19	756
1972	5	89	74	278	177	39	71	251	9	58	25	1076

It is interesting to note in table III that since 1964 there has been a fall in the number of cases of septic abortions, but in 1972 the increase was due to a sudden increase in the State of Johore from 70 in 1971 to 251 in 1972.

TABLE IV.
SEPTIC ABORTION — HOSPITAL DEATHS.
YEAR/HOSPITAL DEATHS/STATE

YEAR	PERLIS	KEDAH	PENANG	PERAK	SELANGOR	NEGERI SEMBILAN	MALACCA	JOHORE	PAHANG	TRENGGANU	KELANTAN	TOTAL
1960	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	5
1961	0	2	0	7	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	17
1962	1	1	2	1	6	1	0	4	0	0	2	18
1963	1	0	3	3	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	14
1964	0	3	1	0	N.A.	1	0	2	0	0	2	9
1965	0	3	2	3	N.A.	2	0	0	0	0	2	12
1966	0	0	2	4	N.A.	0	0	1	0	0	7	7
1967	2	0	1	1	3	2	2	3	0	0	0	13
1968	0	3	2	1	6	1	1	3	2	0	0	19
1969	0	0	1	5	1	3	2	2	1	0	0	15
1970	2	1	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	10
1971	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
1972	0	1	1	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	8
6	14	18	29	31	15	7	19	4	2	7	152	

Table VI showed a remarkable fall in the deaths due to septic abortions. The states with the highest deaths for septic abortions were Selangor and Perak.

TABLE V. YEAR/ ABORTION ADMISSIONS/ ABORTION DEATHS/RATE

YEAR	ABORTION ADMISSION	ABORTION DEATHS	RATE
1960	8724	13	1.5/1000
1961	9271	24	2.6/1000
1962	9993	33	3.5/1000
1963	10360	27	2.6/1000
1964	9694	15	1.5/1000
1965	9841	23	2.3/1000
1966	8830	11	1.2/1000
1967	11331	17	1.5/1000
1968	11929	24	2.0/1000
1969	12044	22	1.8/1000
1970	12791	27	2.1/1000
1971	13245	11	0.8/1000
1972	14742	12	0.8/1000

Table V showed that although there was an increase in the number of admissions for all types of abortions from 8724 in 1960 to 14741 in 1972, during the same period the total general admissions to Government Hospital in Peninsular Malaysia doubled, thus showing an actual fall in the incidence of abortion cases. The mortality rate for abortions was highest in 1962 with 3.5 per 1000 and lowest in 1971 and 1972 with 0.8 per 1000.

TABLE VI. SEPTIC ABORTIONS/YEAR/ADMISSIONS/DEATHS/RATE

Year	Admissions	Deaths	Rate
1960	606	5	8.3/1000
1961	882	17	19.2/1000
1962	1062	18	16.9/1000
1963	967	14	14.5/1000
1964	1100	9	8.2/1000
1965	774	12	15.5/1000
1966	539	7	12.9/1000
1967	689	13	18.9/1000
1968	818	19	23.4/1000
1969	976	15	15.4/1000
1970	814	10	12.3/1000
1971	756	5	6.6/1000
1972	1076	8	7.5/1000

Table VI showed that septic abortion is still an important cause of maternal deaths but it is encouraging to note that there has been a fall in the deaths from 23.4 per 1000 in 1968 to 6.6 per 1000 in 1971 and 7.5 per 1000 in 1972.

TABLE VII

YEAR/SPONTANEOUS ABORTIONS SEPTIC ABORTIONS/
DELIVERIES IN GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL
WEST MALAYSIA

Year	Spontaneous Abortions.	Induced Septic Abortion.	Deliveries	Pregnancy wastage in percentage.
1964	8591	1100	83654	10.38
1965	6067	774	84292	7.50
1966	8291	539	87101	9.20
1967	10672	689	87761	11.46
1968	11111	818	89230	11.79
1969	11280	764	92583	11.51
1970	11977	814	86178	12.92
1971	12489	756	100523	11.64

Table VII showed the pregnancy wastage that abortions account for in the Government Hospital.

COMMENTS:—

1. Abortions is still a major problem in the Government Hospitals of Peninsular Malaysia.
2. Abortions accounts for 10 to 12% of pregnancy wastage in the Government Hospitals of Peninsular Malaysia.
3. The number of Hospital admissions for abortions has increased over the years.
4. The incidence of Hospital admissions for septic abortion has shown a remarkable fall.
5. The reason for the lowered incidence may be due to

(i) With the establishment of more private hospitals, nursing homes and clinics, and in spite of the fact that pregnancy termination is illegal except where there are Medical indi-

cations, patients wanting pregnancy termination for socio-economic or personal reasons are resorting more to the services of private clinics and less to the services of the unqualified abortionists.

(ii) Family planning services are readily available and women are spacing their pregnancies with the result that there is a fall in the incidence of unwanted pregnancies.

6. Abortions, especially septic abortions carry a high morbidity and mortality
7. It is hoped that by raising the standard of living, education on the needs to space out pregnancies and better utilisation of family planning services, that women will resort less to the services of the untrained abortionists to terminate an unwanted and unplanned pregnancy.