

Botched cataract surgery blinds 14 in India

November 5 2015

At least 14 people in western India have lost sight in one eye after botched cataract surgeries, doctors and officials said Thursday, the latest example of poor medical care in the country.

Authorities in the state of Maharashtra blamed [hospital staff](#) for failing to sterilise equipment properly and causing the blindness, following what is generally considered to be a low-risk operation.

"Sheer negligence was shown by doctors and the civil surgeons," Maharashtra Health Minister Deepak Sawant told AFP.

"We have suspended three doctors and some supporting staff. We have launched a high-level inquiry and if they are found guilty they will be removed from the health services," he added.

Twenty three patients were affected by the bungled operations, which took place over a couple of weeks at a district hospital in Washim, around 450 kilometres (280 miles) east of India's commercial capital Mumbai.

After complaining of pain and loss of vision, they were then taken to Mumbai on October 31 where eye specialists were able to fully restore the sight of four patients.

"We operated on all of them and four have had their sight restored. But up until now 14 have lost their vision in one eye. For the other five, we are trying," the dean of J.J. Hospital, T.P. Lahane, told AFP.

Lahane, a cataract expert, said the patients had all suffered from a highly infectious strain of bacteria called "pseudomonas".

The case raises fresh concerns about hygiene standards in India's severely stretched health-care services.

It comes after around 20 people were blinded by free cataract surgeries in northern Punjab state in December last year.

That incident came just weeks after the deaths of 13 women following mass sterilisation surgeries at a health camp in central India.

© 2015 AFP

Citation: Botched cataract surgery blinds 14 in India (2015, November 5) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-11-botched-cataract-surgery-india.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.