

Study details humanitarian surgical care in afghanistan

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(HealthDay)—Humanitarian surgical care (HSC) has been provided to

local national civilians during the Afghanistan conflict, with 49.3 percent of patients treated for non-war-related (NWR) conditions, according to a research letter published online Sept. 13 in *JAMA Surgery*.

Sharon R. Weeks, M.D., from the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and colleagues conducted a retrospective study on HSC provided by deployed U.S. military medical units to local national civilians during the Afghanistan conflict. Data were collected from Jan. 1, 2002, to March 21, 2013, for noncombatant local national patients older than 15 years who underwent at least one surgical [procedure](#) in military treatment facilities. Patient subgroups were examined according to their war-related (WR) or NWR classification.

The researchers found that 5,786 local national civilians underwent 9,428 surgical procedures during the study period, accounting for 37,121 inpatient days. Overall, 80.9 percent of patients were male and 49.3 percent were treated for NWR conditions. Patients with NWR conditions were older, had shorter lengths of stay, fewer procedures, lower blood transfusion requirements, and lower in-hospital mortality than patients with WR injuries. Overall, 38.7 percent of NWR patients underwent elective or noninjury procedures; most presentations were due to injury.

"Injured [patients](#) received most of the procedures, which is consistent with the high burden of trauma in low- and middle-income countries," the authors write. "This report also shows the significant resources committed to noninjury and elective [conditions](#)."

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