

APOS statement on paediatric orthopaedics during the COVID-19 pandemic

Australian Paediatric Orthopaedic Society

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COVID-19 is a target that is moving quickly and every patient, surgeon and hospital will soon find themselves in an individual situation that won't allow generalisations. We trust our paediatric orthopaedic colleagues to make sound decisions and to ask for help when required.

Given the rapidly developing nature of this situation, APOS will not at this point be releasing an advisory list regarding elective surgery categorisation. We trust that each surgeon will continue to be guided by what is in the best interests of patients, team members and the public.

At the moment, every patient and family member that comes to hospital is exposed to a potential risk and places hospital staff at risk. The degree of risk is constantly changing as the pandemic evolves. The degree of risk will be different for every patient and for different orthopaedic units. Every hospital encounter uses resources, whether staff, beds or equipment. The available resources will differ between orthopaedic units. Paediatric orthopaedics involves hospitals with adults and children, surgeons in higher risk age groups, and patients in higher risk groups and from higher risk regions.

We trust each surgeon to consider whether the benefits of any pre-COVID-19 standard of care outweigh the current risks with every patient that you treat in your current situation and that you will constantly re-evaluate. We trust that if a surgeon decides to bring a patient to hospital or to operate on a patient and there is a resultant exposure or infection in a patient, family or staff member or a subsequent resource shortage, they will be satisfied with their decision making and satisfied that the risk was justified.

APOS members are encouraged to contact the APOS executive for guidance and support if needed while we all try to do our best at a very challenging time.

APOS Executive Committee

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