

3. Organisation of vascular services

Size of vascular unit

Hospital staff completing the organisational questionnaire were asked to classify the size of the vascular unit at their hospital as large, intermediate or remote:

Large vascular unit: Hospital with sufficiently large catchment population (at least 500,000) to employ at least four vascular surgeons and the potential for an on-site vascular rota.

Intermediate vascular unit: Hospital with catchment population of less than 500,000, fully equipped for vascular surgery but with insufficient vascular surgeons for an on-site emergency rota.

Remote vascular unit: Separated by long distances from other hospitals, and usually serving small catchment population.

Figure 1 shows how hospitals classified themselves. 47 hospitals were classified as large units, 106 as intermediate and 16 as remote. For 12 hospitals the question was not answered. Of the 884 patients in this study, 411 were cared for in larger vascular units, 411 in intermediate units and 19 in remote vascular units. The size of unit was not given for 43 patients.

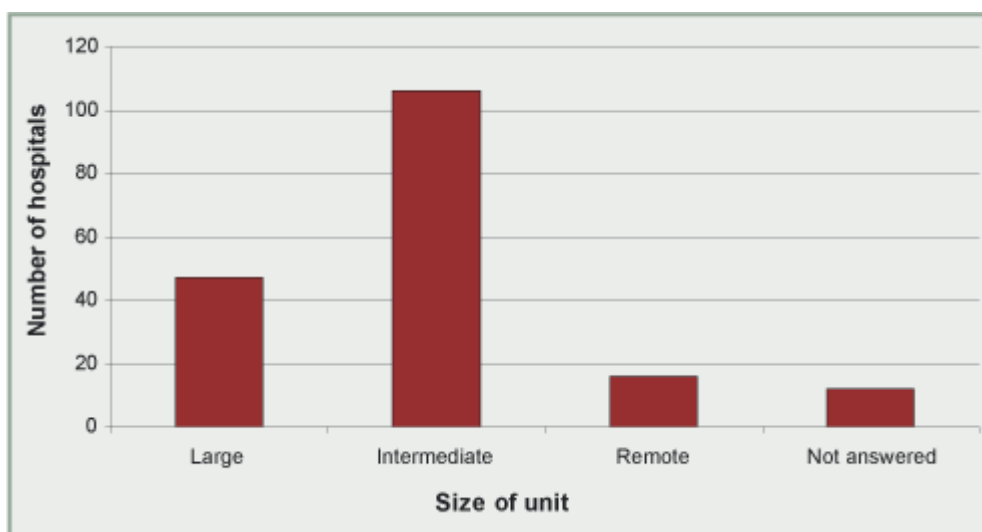


Figure 1 . Size of vascular unit $n=181$