

3. Organisation of vascular services

Hospital workload >> Elective versus emergency repairs

There was a great variation between hospitals in the number of elective operations performed compared to the number of emergency operations. Figure 4 plots the elective to emergency ratio for all hospitals that did at least one elective and one emergency aortic aneurysm repair in 2002/03. Three hospitals carried out no elective repairs in 2002/03 but at least one emergency repair.

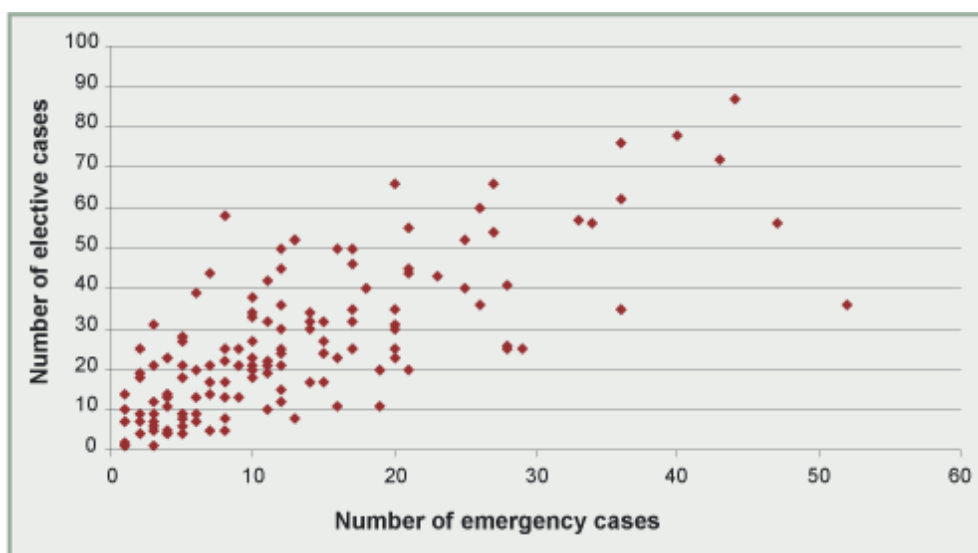


Figure 4. Number of emergency open repairs by number of elective open repairs $n=137/181$

It is remarkable that there should be such a variation in the pattern of work. Some hospitals had a ratio of two elective operations to one emergency operation, whilst in others the ratio was reversed. NCEPOD has no data that would explain why there should be such variations in the pattern of work, even between hospitals that were performing substantial numbers of procedures. Nor does NCEPOD have the data to analyse whether there is a difference in outcome between hospitals that correlates with the difference in the proportion of elective to emergency operations performed.