

# WORLD CONGRESS ON RHEUMATIC HEART DISEASE

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**Title:** ENHANCING TERTIARY CARE AND SURGERY IN NAMIBIA: AN ANALYSIS

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**Background & Aims:** Namibia faces significant challenges in delivering effective tertiary care and surgical services. Our study aims to analyze the current state of tertiary care and surgery in Namibia, identifying areas for improvement and potential strategies for enhancement. To gain a comprehensive understanding, we incorporated the insights of Josef Nashilongo, a rheumatic heart disease ambassador and patient, who provided valuable perspectives based on his personal experience.

**Methods:** We conducted a thorough analysis, which involved collecting data through surveys, interviews, and reviewing existing literature. Additionally, we engaged Josef Nashilongo, who shared his experiences and insights as a patient living with rheumatic heart disease. Through this collaborative approach, we aimed to capture both the professional and personal aspects of tertiary care and surgery in Namibia. Key indicators, including access to tertiary care, surgical outcomes, and resource allocation, were assessed. The analysis focused on identifying barriers and gaps in the existing system.

**Results:** Quality of Surgical Care: The quality of surgical care in our hospital's tertiary care has been generally satisfactory, with positive patient outcomes and a low incidence of major complications. However, Josef Nashilongo highlighted the need for greater awareness and support for patients with specific conditions, such as rheumatic heart disease. Additionally, he emphasized the importance of patient-centered care and the role of education in improving surgical outcomes.

**Common Outcomes:** Our analysis, complemented by Josef Nashilongo's insights, identified several common outcomes associated with different surgeries at our hospital. The mortality rates have been consistently low, indicating good surgical safety practices. Complication rates varied depending on the procedure, with postoperative infections being the most frequent. Length of stay ranged from a few days to several weeks, depending on the complexity of the surgery and postoperative recovery.

**Factors Contributing to Successful Outcomes:** Several factors were found to contribute to successful outcomes in tertiary care surgery at our hospital. These include a multidisciplinary approach involving specialized surgical teams, comprehensive preoperative assessments, adherence to evidence-based protocols, and effective postoperative care, including close monitoring and rehabilitation support. Josef Nashilongo stressed the importance of patient empowerment and involvement in decision-making processes for better outcomes.

**Barriers and Facilitators:** Barriers to delivering high-quality tertiary care surgery in our hospital include limited availability of advanced surgical equipment, inadequate staffing levels, and challenges in maintaining consistent supply chains for surgical materials. Josef Nashilongo highlighted the need for increased awareness campaigns, improved access to healthcare facilities in remote areas, and enhanced collaboration between healthcare providers and patient communities. However, facilitators such as dedicated and skilled healthcare professionals, collaborative teamwork, ongoing professional development programs, and patient advocacy initiatives have positively influenced the quality of care.

**Conclusions:** This study, enriched by the insights of Josef Nashilongo as a rheumatic heart disease ambassador and patient, highlights the overall satisfactory quality of surgical care in our hospital's tertiary care, with low mortality rates and positive patient outcomes. The identification of common outcomes and factors contributing to successful outcomes, including the importance of patient-centered care and education, provide valuable insights for further improvement. Addressing the identified barriers, such as improving access to advanced surgical equipment and strengthening healthcare infrastructure, while leveraging the facilitators, such as dedicated healthcare professionals and patient advocacy, can enhance the delivery of high-quality tertiary care surgery in Namibia. This will ultimately lead to better patient outcomes, improved patient satisfaction, and a more inclusive healthcare system.