

A Sacral Neuromodulation Unit in a Neuro Rehabilitation Department: what are we speaking of?

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Hypothesis / aims of study

We present a feasibility study concerning the choice of establishing a dedicated Sacral Neuromodulation (SNM) Unit within a Neurorehabilitation Department.

Study design, materials and methods

SNM is worldwide recognized as an effective functional therapy to restore compromised lower urinary tract (LUT) and bowel dysfunction. SNM is a surgical procedure.

Neurorehabilitation is a specialized medical process designed to aid recovery and improve functional abilities of patients who have experienced neurological conditions. Neurorehabilitation treatment forecasts mainly medical approach.

Following 29 years of SNM activity in a Surgical Department, from August 2024 to the beginning of March 2026 every week we recovered 4 urological and coloproctological patients selected for SNM procedures in the Neurorehabilitation Department of our Spinal Unit (total of 196 patients).

We followed patients for satisfaction interviews, frequency of surgical infections of first stage procedures, percentage of positive outcomes of first stage procedures.

Results

No modification in frequency of surgical infections and in percentage of positive outcome of SNM tests were detected. Satisfaction interviews highlighted a high satisfaction rate referred to overall satisfaction and the quality of care process. The improvement of patients' overall satisfaction was reported either in positive results of SNM tests or in negative ones.

Interpretation of results

Positive reports in satisfaction interview in spite of clinical results of SNM tests could correlate with the effect of comprehensive care in optimizing patients outcomes. The unchanged frequency of post-operative infections even in a rehabilitation (medical) ward might sustain that surgical ward admission may not be required.

Concluding message.

The presence of a specialized SNM Unit within a Neurorehabilitation setting improved patient adherence to the functional treatment, independently from the result test. An adequate setting may potentially reduce the long-term burden of chronic functional conditions. An adequate medical setting may fit functional surgery' patients.