**Trauma Society of South Africa Protocol**

**The Management of the Anterior Abdominal Stab Wound**

- **Abdominal Stab Wound**

  - **Indications for Laparotomy**
    - Haemodynamically unstable.
    - Decreased level of consciousness.
    - Spinal cord injury.
    - Acute Abdomen.
    - Bowel Evisceration.
    - Blood in nasogastric tube.
    - Blood on rectal examination.

  - **Indication for Abdominal Observation**
    - Haemodynamically stable.
    - Fully conscious for serial examination.
    - No spinal cord injury.
    - No Acute Abdomen.

  - **Abdominal Observation**
    - Serial clinical examination 4 to 6 hourly.
    - NPO for 24 hours.
    - No Antibiotics.
    - Monitor temperature 6 hourly.
    - One hourly BP, PR and RR for 6 hours then 4-hourly.

  - **Failure of Abdominal Observation**
    - Pyrexia.
    - Worsening abdominal signs.
    - Elevated WCC.
    - Laparotomy

  - **Successful**
    - Trial Feed after 24-hours
    - Discharge after 48-hours

  - **Not Successful**