The development of a Pre-op Call Center was spurred by numerous patient reports regarding hardships resulting from less than 24 hour notice of surgery times as well as inadequate pre-op preparation. Arrangements for transportation, child care, post-op care and time off work were noted concerns. Medication and NPO instructions were not received in a timely manner. Last minute delays and cancellations created inefficiencies for the operating rooms and surgeons. These factors contributed to low patient satisfaction scores for our facility.

Our objectives were to change our practice of how and when patients received their surgery time and standardize pre-op instructions thereby increasing patient satisfaction and safety.

A literature search revealed no information on when patients were given their surgery time. Surveys were conducted to identify local and national practices revealing a majority of facilities following our previous practice. We chose one surgery service as a pilot. We began calling patients four business days before surgery. Once the processes were worked out, we added one to two services per month over a 16 month period. The challenges were to get surgeon cooperation and communication between many hospital departments.

Since implementing this practice change 2 years ago, we are receiving reports of increased patient satisfaction, positive comments from surgeons and Perioperative staff and won a hospital’s “President’s Award”.

By changing our practice we are able to advocate for our patients to provide them with more time to make preparations, consistent pre-op instructions, reduce their anxiety and create a more positive perianesthesia experience.