

IMPROVING FIRST CASE ON TIME STARTS

Team Leader: Sally W. Morgan, MS, RN, ANP-BC, GNP-BC
The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, Columbus, Ohio
Team Member: Vanessa Jamison, BSN, RN-C

With operating room (OR) time running upwards of \$21 per minute, delayed starts for surgical procedures negatively impact patient care and present an inefficient use of medical resources including money, time, and personnel. In November 2011, our hospital had a dismal on-time start record of 55% compared to the 80% on-time start record at the nation's top hospitals. The decision was made to use a process improvement program referred to as DMAIC: Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control to target 90% first case on-time starts; to improve patient satisfaction, quality and safety; to standardize and create visibility on key operational metrics; and to maximize capacity, reduce delays and cancelation rates.

Key barriers of standardization, communication, and accountability were identified. A matrix was developed and each perioperative department had specific assignments. The perianesthesia nursing staff identified and implemented specific communication strategies and coordinated efforts among the units and other stakeholders to standardize the gathering of patient information which helped shorten patient care in the preoperative setting from 60 to 45 minutes. After an intensive fifteen month effort by all perioperative staff, the goal of 90% OR on-time starts was achieved with an annual savings of more than \$800,000. Efficient quality care is now being delivered in a timely manner through clear communication, standardization, and accountability while meeting the patient's expectations of comfort, convenience, and timeliness.