

## **PROVIDING VALUE IN SURGICAL SERVICES: IMPLEMENTATION OF A SURGICAL CLEARINGHOUSE**

Team Leaders: Andrea Carver BSN RN, Stephanie Meyer RN MSN FNP  
Children's Mercy Hospital, Kansas City, Missouri

**Background Information:** The Surgical Clearinghouse (SCH) is a service to improve the patient experience and overall efficiency in the operating room while decreasing costs, wasted time, and resources due to an inconsistent pre-operative process.

**Objectives of Project:** To streamline pre-operative coordination of care, increase patient preparedness, and decrease day of surgery cancellations/delays.

**Process of Implementation:** A team of clinical nurses partnered with all surgical subspecialties to ensure the pre-operative criteria for each patient was addressed prior to their arrival. Direct contact with each family is made, by a SCH nurse 5-7 days prior to surgery to discuss individual patient needs and requirements, while problem solving solutions that allow for a successful experience on the day of surgery. We begin with surgery verification and confirmation and ensure correct laterality is documented. Initial phone contact is made with the patient/legal guardian to confirm surgery and review patient's health history, screening for potential barriers to surgery. As problems are identified, nurses resolve them; ensuring patients go to surgery as scheduled. Surgical consent, order and schedule are reviewed for consistency while transportation, social work concerns and other needs are addressed. If an issue is identified that could delay or cancel the surgery the nurses in the SCH will resolve these issues or cancel the patient if warranted during the initial communication phase. By cancelling patients 48 hours prior to the surgery date allows the surgeons to back fill their open operating room (OR) block to ensure maximum utilization of OR time. Before implementation of the SCH this would have resulted in a same day surgery cancellation causing lost revenue and delays in surgery flow and decreased OR utilization time.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** To date the SCH has generated approximately \$11.6 million dollars in revenue. Employing a variety of new strategies that ensure active management of operating room block-time, staff is able to complete cases with minimal interruptions and down time. Daily block time utilization has improved in addition to our day of surgery cancellations which have decreased by 33%.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** Patients and families are more prepared upon arrival for surgery, resulting in increased peri-operative efficiency and improved patient and staff satisfaction.