

PRE-ANESTHESIA SCREENING IN THE ELECTRONIC MEDICAL RECORD: A JOURNEY TO DECREASE CANCELLATIONS AND DELAYS THE DAY OF SURGERY AND INCREASE PATIENT SATISFACTION

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In 2008 first case OR delays ranged 35-45% and pre-anesthesia evaluation was determined by the surgeon. In response, all patients were scheduled in the anesthesia clinic prior to their OR. The extra clinic visit and wait time caused decreased patient satisfaction and for some patients little added value.

Goal or objective:

- Identify a valid/reliable pre-anesthesia screening tool to promote patient safety in the peri-operative period and prevent unnecessary delays and cancellations on the day of surgery
- Increase patient satisfaction

A team identified screening criteria through review of standards and literature and past anesthesia concerns. The screening criteria was implemented on paper first, then in the electronic documentation system and rolled out to clinic support staff. Alerts were programmed into the electronic documentation to prompt staff compliance with follow up. Policies were written to allow nursing staff to order tests based on the screening. Scheduling practices were changed to accommodate scheduling patients based on the screening information.

First case delay rates have decreased from 38% to 7%. Patient satisfaction scores are at the 90th percentile.

Challenges addressed with developing and implementing the pre-anesthesia screening included:

- Attempting to create the perfect screening tool to screen in and out appropriate patients with appropriate wording for support staff.
- Building essential items into the electronic documentation system i.e. flow sheets, order modes, best practice advisories
- Modifying scheduling work flows