

Lessons Learned in Opening a Multi-Specialty Ambulatory Surgery Center

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Abstract Background Information: Challenges and delays were encountered prior to the opening of a Multi-Specialty Ambulatory Surgery Center (ASC). Many problems stemmed from late inclusion of clinical staff and siloed planning, and poor communication among stakeholders. The project's scope was underestimated due to limited understanding of operational needs. Decisions were made about nurses' work processes and needs by non-nurses, which resulted in infrastructure issues like poorly placed outlets, non-centralized placement of status boards, and the ordering of extraneous surgical equipment.

Objectives of Project: The objective is to identify causes of delays, determine how to improve communication between key stakeholders, and develop a process to streamline the planning and opening of surgical centers.

Process of Implementation: Significant improvements were achieved by introducing structured, cross-disciplinary communication. A thrice-weekly meeting with all 22 departments involved allowed issues to be addressed collaboratively. A shared spreadsheet kept everyone informed of the initiatives, while walkthroughs and simulated procedures led by nurses helped identify and resolve practical issues. Nurses were empowered to directly engage with facility planners to troubleshoot and optimize the space.

Statement of Successful Practice: These efforts allowed for the successful opening of ASC. The biggest takeaway was the need for early, consistent interdisciplinary collaboration. Several departments were needed to effectively track down problems and plan solutions together, and the only true way to discover all the problems was to bring those who would be using the spaces, particularly nurses, into the process. To maintain interdisciplinary communication after the conclusion of the project, committees were formed to stay on top of new information and ensure it spread to various groups.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: The implications of this project for perioperative nursing come as recommendations for any nurse leaders who are involved in similar projects. Perioperative nurses must be involved in project planning. They are instrumental in creating spaces that prioritize patient safety and effective care. Staff hiring and equipment purchasing must be started early so nurses can be oriented and trained with equipment. Design decisions should be made using the AORN Guidelines as a framework.