

## **An Epic Journey of Process Improvement for Preoperative Patient Optimization**

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**Abstract Background Information:** Saratoga Hospital is a small non-profit community hospital in Upstate New York that joined an affiliation with a 5 Facility regional network system. This consortium consists of three regional hospitals and Visiting Nurses Home Care Organization. All facilities are governed by AMC, the largest Northeastern NY and Western New England not for profit health system, unique with Children's Hospital and Medical College.

Many changes have transpired at Saratoga Hospital since the associated enterprise induction. Primarily, a unified database format mandated a transition to a new comprehensive Epic software program for electronic healthcare records (EHR).

### **Objectives of Project:**

- Explain the effect of transfer from a Surgeon-driven testing to Anesthesia -driven pre-op method of planning for diagnostic testing and preparation.
- Decrease non-essential testing, decrease medical costs/ and increase patient satisfaction with uncovered insurance co-pays.
- Improve pre-op preparation and patient optimization for successful surgical and post-op outcomes.
- To decrease day of surgery cancellations.
- Demonstrate the Epic quest and arduous journey of continuous rapid cycle change experienced by the pre-testing staff during the transition to Epic from Meditech.

**Process of Implementation:** An Anesthesia Lead task force included Surgical Services nurse leaders, pre-testing resource nurse and Pre-testing ANP's.

In the months prior to the Epic Go-Live date this Surgical Home workflow specialist team identified a need for a standardized risk stratification tool. The collaborative group participants developed an Excel Spreadsheet to ascertain pre-op testing correlated to low, moderate, high-risk surgeries and patients' diagnoses. The pre-op requirements are identified by utilizing a categorical template of patient medical history and risk level of surgery.

Surgical Home ANP's adopted responsibility for optimization of clients via medical evaluations. EKG, lab orders, and specialty clearance referrals. PAT RNs learned to navigate via phone interviews and schedule clinic appointments, or outpatient testing accordingly.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** After a greater than 2 1/2-year time frame of development a new process for optimization of patients pre-operatively, the PAT unit has achieved significant gains at streamlining the anesthesia driven Epic protocols. The Epic odyssey is a continuum of rapid cycle change that strives for 100 % positive patient outcomes.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** A systematic improved process of Pre-procedure preparation to optimize patients for successful surgical experiences.