



# Mass Casualty Incident Planning in a Pediatric Peri-Operative Trauma Center



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## Background

- Mass casualty events involving pediatric victims has highlighted the need to improve the readiness of the Peri-Operative staff .
- Prior to 2023, the code triage drills focused on the initial stages in the Emergency Room with limited attention towards children who may need urgent or emergent surgical interventions in the Operating Room.
- Planning for an MCI during normal operating room hours versus planning for one after hours /weekends, presented the need to evaluate how to muster the Peri-operative team required to handle such an influx of surgical patients during a n External Code Triage .

## Practice Issue

- A surge of pediatric surgical patients from an MCI is unpredictable and challenging to manage without proper organization and preparation of the entire Peri-Operative team.
- This surge would present differently during normal operating room hours Monday thru Friday versus off hours or on the weekends with limited teams and ancillary staff. Both scenarios would require different considerations and mobilization of the surgical team.
- A Disaster Call list had been in existence for over 20 years but had never been trialed in a real time drill after hours.
- No organized meeting place/white board existed prior to 2023 to help organized a surgical influx of patients during an MCI.
- No policy was available to guide the Peri-operative staff in the event of a Code Triage/MCI.

## Goal

- To increase organization and efficient mobilization of the Peri-operative Services Team during a Code Triage/MCI event.

## Methods

- After much collaboration with the Peri-Operative Clinical Coordinators, Anesthesia Providers and Surgical Services Leadership team a new Peri-operative Emergency Management plan was developed.
- Front line staff were educated in the new plan and participated in three large scale MCI drills beginning in 2023, 2024, May and September of 2025.
- Front line staff participated in two real time drills that tested the Disaster Call list for Surgical Services.



2023 – Initial new white board, disorganized and hard to read



2025 – new magnets, color coded to OR rooms and staff, easy to read and organized.

## Results

- Peri-op team , Pre-op/PACU/OR /Anesthesia now participates in monthly MCI multidisciplinary team.
- A new policy was published in November 2024 CHM MOD SS 319 “Surgical Suite Emergency Management Plan: Code Triage External.”
- New Surgical Triage White board was developed that now serves as a central meeting point and organizes each team to each patient ,available staff/space during an MCI .
- Two successful I trials of the off hour Disaster Call list with 63% - 70% of staff stating they were able to report back for duty to assist in the case of an MCI event.

## Future Practice Implications

- With this new updated approach to MCI training and education, the Peri-operative staff has increased organization and readiness in an MCI Event.
- Next steps are to expand the drills to include an influx of patients into the PACU as overflow from the Emergency Room or ICU in Early Summer 2026.
- Increase participation from Central Sterile Processing in MCI drills to ensure proper instrumentation would be turned over and ready for multiple patients.
- Increase Disaster Call drills to bi-annually .

## References

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