

**Completed Nursing Assessment 24 Hours Prior to Surgery:  
Impact on Patient Safety and Surgical Readiness**

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**Introduction:** Timely registered nurse (RN) assessments - completed within 24 hours of surgery - are essential to patient safety and surgical readiness. Ensuring timely completion mitigates perioperative risks, minimizes procedural delays, promotes high quality coordinated surgical care.

**Identification of the Problem:** Delayed RN assessments risks missed clinical indicators, last-minute cancellations, and compromised patient safety.

**QI Question/Purpose of the Study:** This quality improvement project examines the effect of timely RN preoperative assessments on patient safety, surgical readiness, and workflow efficiency within perioperative workflows.

**Methods:** RN assessments completed within 24 hours prior to surgeries were reviewed for protocol compliance. Daily audits tracked compliance, flagged incomplete assessments in real time, and supported process improvements.

**Outcomes/Results:** The data from the daily tracking board demonstrates a significant improvement in the timely completion of preoperative RN assessments. During the last quarter of 2024, 94.5% of assessments were completed within 24 hours prior to surgery, an increase from 73% during the same period of 2022. This improvement enabled earlier detection of potential health issues, improved surgical preparedness, and streamlined perioperative care and patient flow.

**Discussion:** Timely RN assessments serve as a frontline defense against perioperative complications, enabling early risk detection and smoother surgical workflows. Routine audits and standardized protocols help ensure every patient receives high-quality, consistent care, thereby achieving positive surgical outcomes.

**Conclusion:** Completion of RN assessments within 24 hours before surgery is critical to ensure patient safety, surgical readiness, and efficient perioperative care. Timely and thorough assessments reduce procedural delays, prevent complications, and enhance patient outcomes.

**Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research:**

- Positions Perianesthesia nurses as operational stewards and risk mitigators in surgical workflows.
- Emphasizes the necessity for standardized protocols and meticulous documentation during preoperative nursing assessments.

- Supports enhanced patient education and early risk detection to further improve perioperative outcomes.