

# Same Day Joint Process Improvement for Total Hip and Total Knee Arthroplasty Patients

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## Background

In **December 2024**, a process improvement initiative was launched to establish a standardized, collaborative pathway aimed at minimizing variability in patient management, reducing care delays, preventing unanticipated inpatient admissions, shortening length of stay, and enhancing patient satisfaction by better meeting expectations. Continual growth of the **Same Day Joint volume** since **December 2025** and the **progress in standardization** set the foundation to pursue the utilization of the perioperative space.

## Problem Analysis

**Problem:** Gaps in Awareness, Communication, Collaboration, and Education for Same Day Outpatient Total Joint Patients

- Absence of **standardized criteria** to determine total joint patients eligible for same-day surgery
- Challenges in **Identifying Same Day Joint** replacement patients for Day of Surgery teams; Pre Op, Anesthesia, PACU, Inpatient staff, and Physical Therapy
- Challenges for perioperative nursing with **identifying** care transition needs and interventions completed related to home health, outpatient PT, and DME needs
- Limited interdisciplinary **collaboration** among care team members: MDAs, RNs, care transitions, PT, and surgical team.
- Lack of **formal** pre-surgical joint replacement education and expectations for patients.
- Barriers to discharging patients directly from **Perioperative space**
  - Limited space and limited dedicated care transition support to discharge patients with DME and therapy needs

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate our current process and **create a standardized, collaborative pathway** with Total Joint patients, to be successful and discharge home same day, and advancement for utilization of the perioperative space for discharges instead of utilizing inpatient setting.

## Results

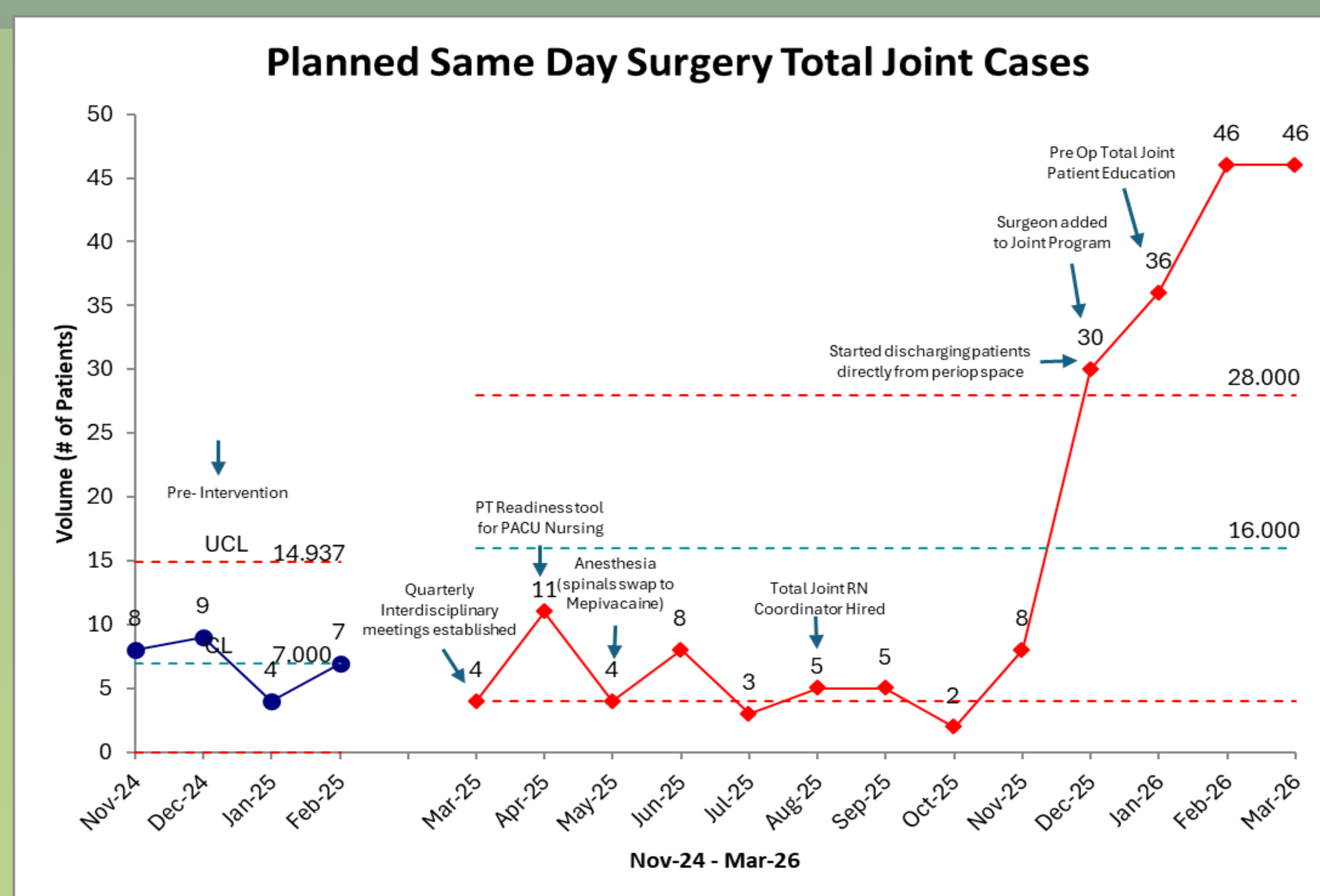


Figure 1: Volume of Planned Same Day Outpatient Total Joint Patients based on surgical posting

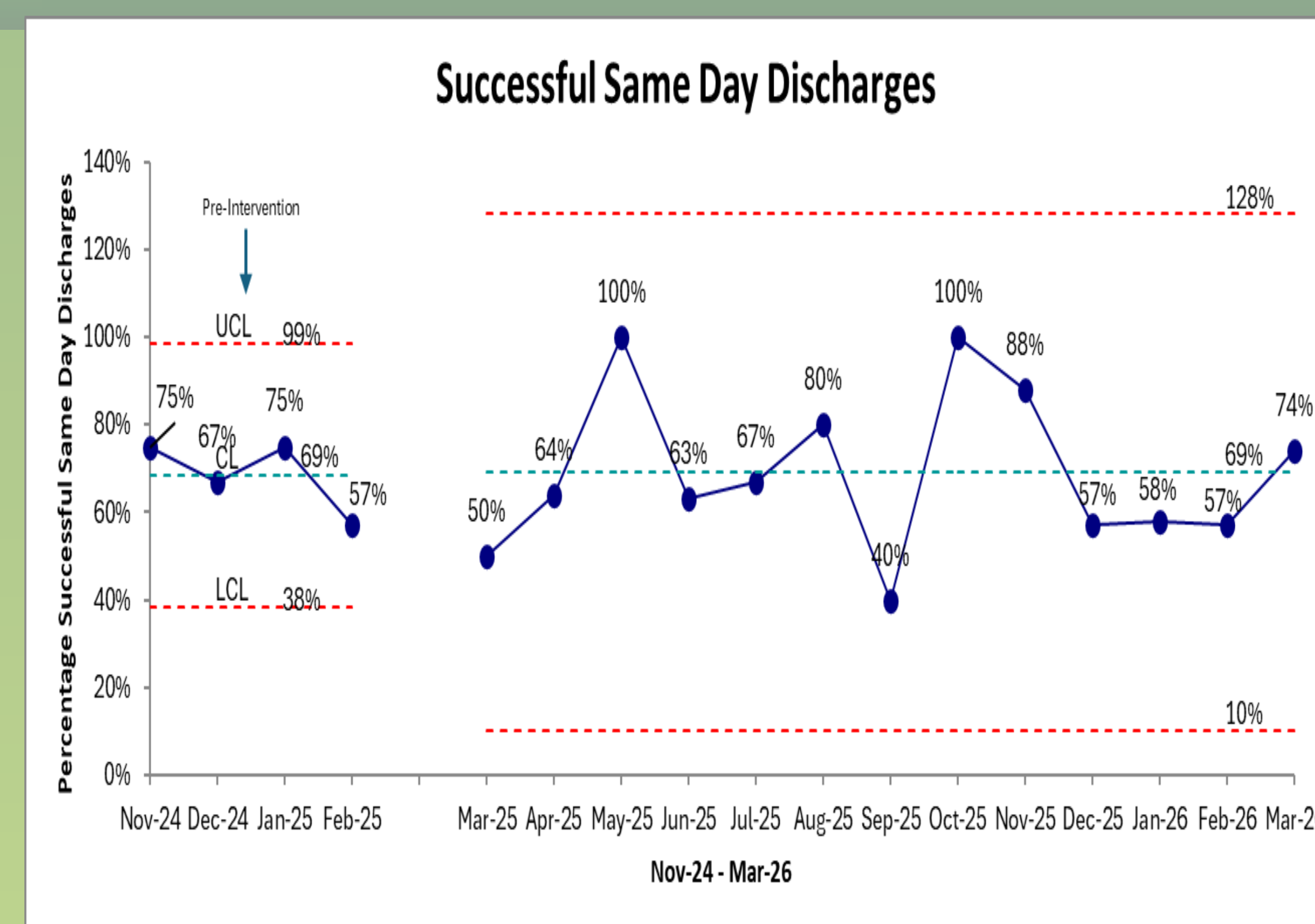


Figure 2: Percentage of Successful Same Day Discharges and Interventions

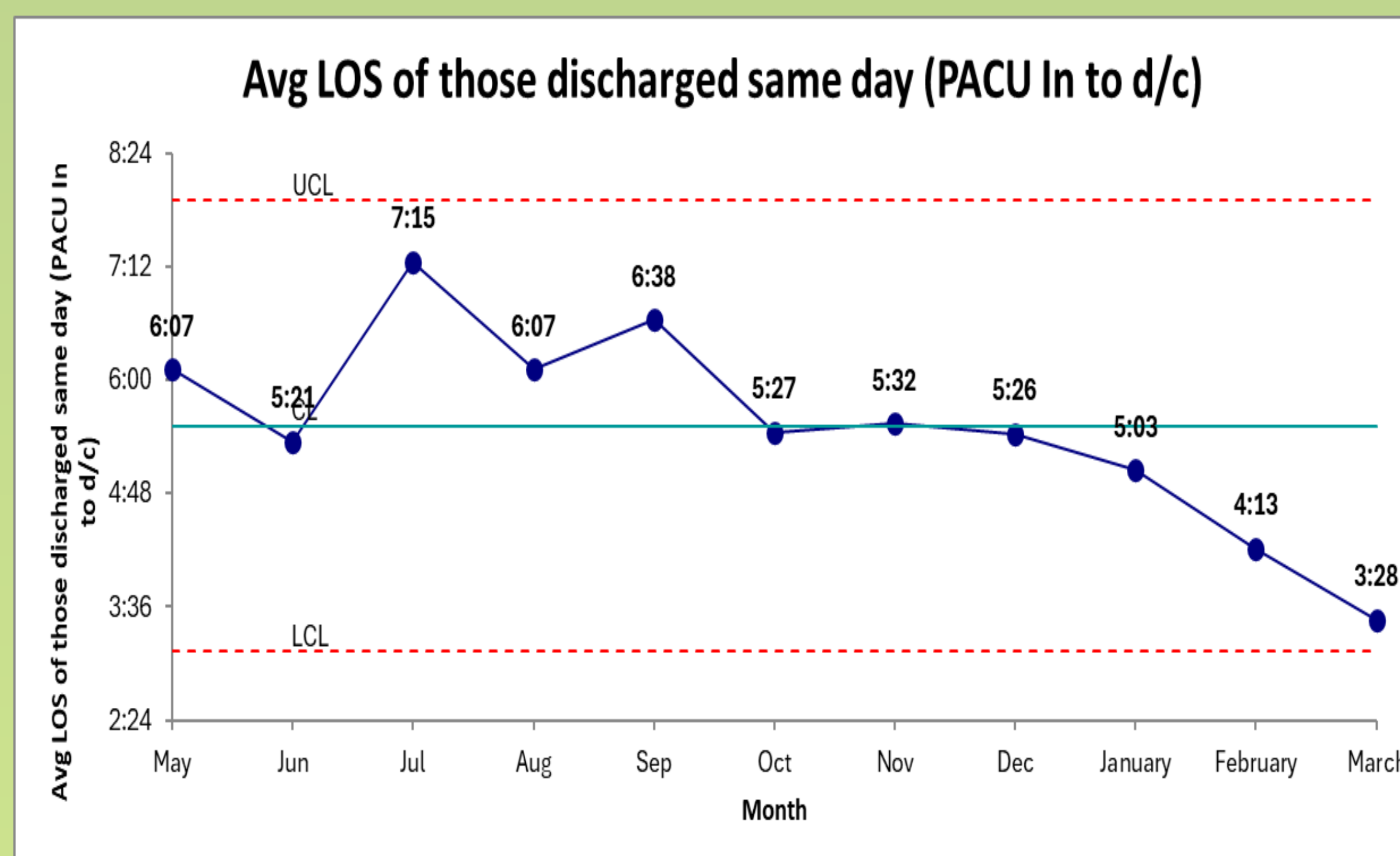


Figure 3: Monthly Length of Stay (LOS) for all planned Same Day Outpatient Total Joint Patients May25-March 26

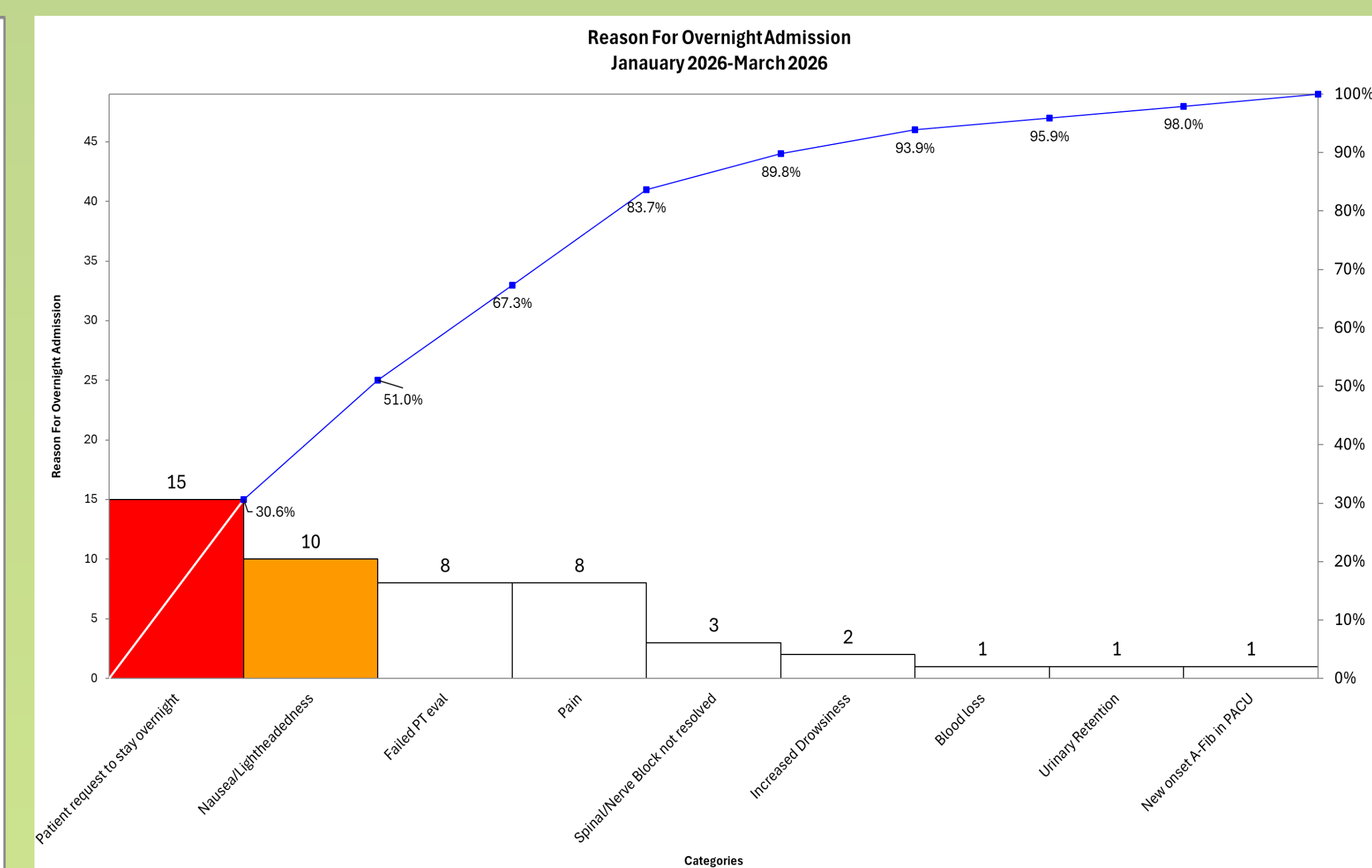


Figure 4: Pareto chart with barriers to discharge listed (Last 3 months: Jan25-Mar25)

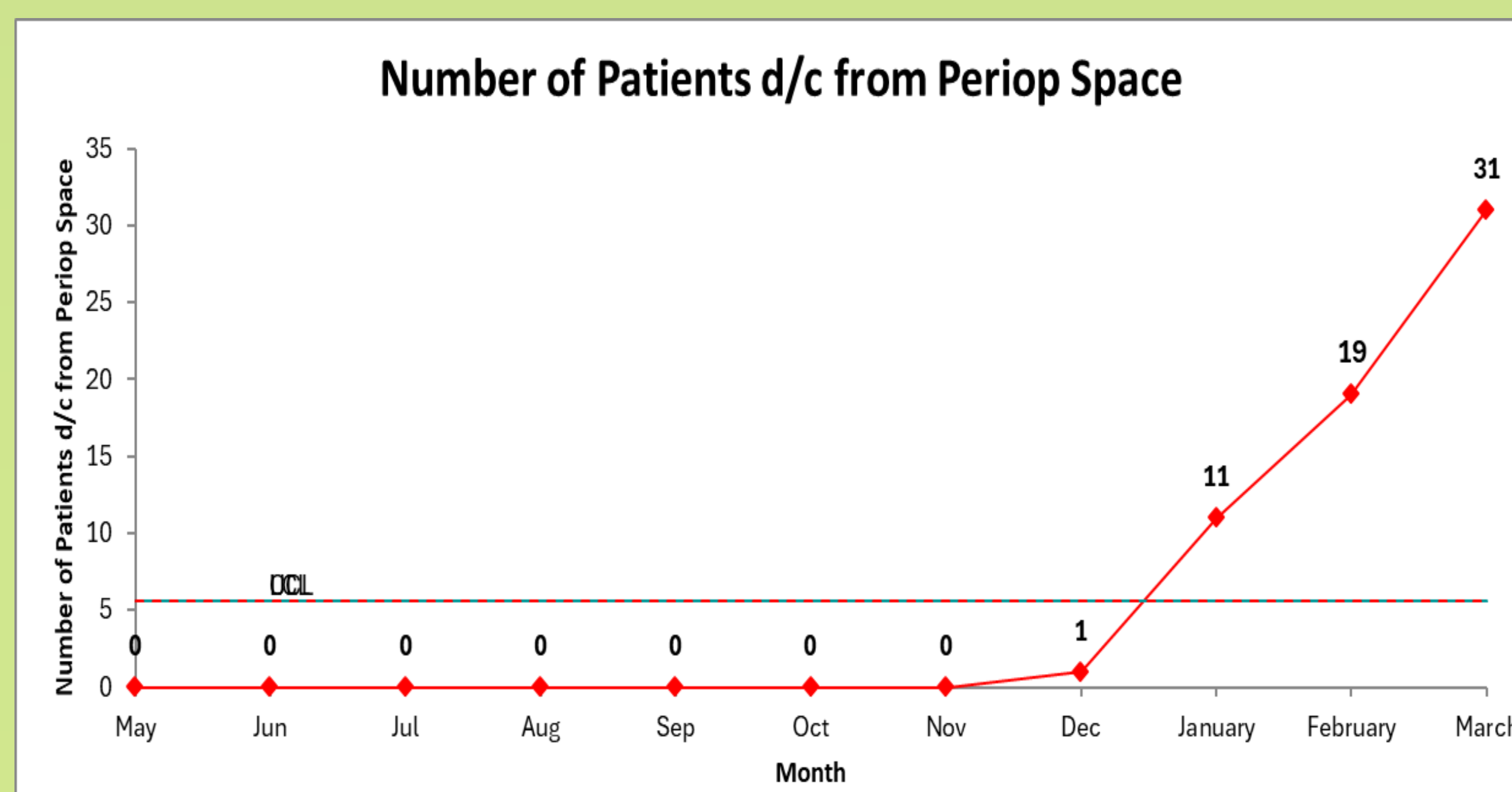


Figure 5: Volume of patients discharged directly from Periop Space

### Checklist for Patient "Readiness" for Therapy For Same Day Surgery Total Joints Knees & Hips

- Able to tolerate HOB elevated at least 30 minutes
- Able to feel limb, perform ankle pump movement
- Able to perform a quad set (place your hand under the patient's surgical side knee and have them straighten the affected leg, pushing back of knee into your hand). You should be able to see quad contract.
- Optimize pain medications
- Remove as many unnecessary lines, foleys, cords etc. as possible

Figure 6: Patient Readiness for Therapy guide for PACU staff

## Methods

### Quarterly Interdisciplinary Collaborative Workgroup Meetings Established March 2025

- **Anesthesia**
  - **May 2025**, Exploration of **spinals** medication swap to mepivacaine
  - **June 2025**, IPS Team Leader collaboration awareness of plan to discharge home same day with MDA
- **Care Transitions**
  - **March 2025**, Enhanced coordination of postop needs one week prior to surgery: Home Health needs identified initially, with transition after new surgeon onboarding in **January 2026** to focus on Outpt PT
  - **April 2025**, Exploration with social work and DME needs, including DME company and ability to receive prior to surgery
  - **December 2025**, Transition to use of inpatient CM for post op needs in the periop space
- **Inpatient Nursing and Physical Therapy**
  - **April 2025**, Implementation of electronic notifications (Vocera) upon patient transfer from PACU
  - **December 2025**, Transition to use of perioperative space for discharge of SDJ patients
- **Perioperative Nursing**
  - **December 2024**, PACU staff education provided on Same Day Outpatient Total Joint discharge goals
  - **January 2025**, Guide for assessing **Patient Readiness for Therapy** initiated prior to transfer from PACU (see Figure 6)
  - **December 2025-January 2026**, Periop staff education with focus on patient motivation, safety to ambulate, and coordination of post op needs
- **Ortho Clinic/Surgical Planning**
  - **April 2025**, Clinical scheduler adding identifier to surgical postings to enhance perioperative awareness of Same-Day Joint cases
  - **August 2025**, **Total Joint Coordinator Position** filled, created for Ortho Team to improve pathway and addition of early planning with in-person education class, and increased engagement
  - **November 2025**, Onboarding of new surgeon
  - **January 2026**, **Total Joint Class** started and preference of new surgeon for no regional blocks for Total Hip

## Future Implications

- **Patient Readiness for Surgery**
  - Total Joint Education Class Mandatory for patients
  - Assessment of environment and DME needs, including DME company and ability to receive equipment prior to surgery
- **Ongoing efforts to strengthen collaboration and communication across all disciplines and departments to enhance patient's experience**
- **Ongoing monitoring of resources and space availabilities in Perioperative space**