Name: Benjamin Lantow

Email: Benjamin.lantow@uchealth.org

Title: Developing a multidisciplinary e-learning module to address surgical count challenges in an academic hospital

Abstract:

Statement of Problem: After zero incidents of retained surgical items (RSI) for five years (and over 55,000 surgical cases), the University of Colorado Hospital reported eight RSI occurrences during fiscal years 2013 and 2014. Subsequent root cause analyses and systemic review of hospital policies revealed multifactorial causes and opportunities to improve (e.g. communication strategies, policies, workflows).

QI Approach: A multidisciplinary Surgical Count Task Force was formed, working immediately to investigate and address RSI contributing factors through clarification and modification of existing hospital policy/standards as well as optimize workflow and enhance multidisciplinary collaboration. This effort culminated in hospital policy modifications and the development of an e-learning module designed to disseminate all changes and increase awareness of RSI concerns. The e-learning module was assigned to all disciplines participating in operative procedures, including outlying areas such as eye surgery centers, birth center, and ambulatory surgery centers within the central UCHealth region. Learners were surgeons, anesthesiologists, radiologists, nurses, and surgical technologists. In all, education was provided to over 1000 individuals.

Outcomes: Since the renewed focus on the impact of RSIs and the previously existing gaps, almost a year has passed since the last RSI incident.

Next Steps: Continued vigilance has been identified as a key to maintaining the low number of RSI events. E-learning participants will be surveyed to assess the effectiveness of the education. Policies and education strategies will be adapted accordingly. The Surgical Count Task Force continues to meet regularly.