## OPERATING ROOM

## **Loaner trays**

Loaner trays present their own set of challenges when it comes to surgical tray planning. As Inova Fair Oaks Hospital had grown in surgical volume, particularly for orthopedic and spine procedures, their loaner tray volume increased as well. According to Mead Mulvihill, Director of PeriOp Support Analytics for Inova Fair Oaks Hospital, not only was the coordination of bringing these trays into the facility cumbersome, often times trays were delivered less than 24 hours before surgery.

"We were able to statistically prove a correlation between the number of loaner trays delivered less than 24 hours before a case and a significant rise in defects such as bioburdens," said Mulvihill.

To help combat these issues, Fair Oaks implemented VenSero, an online solution that automates the ordering and communication surrounding loaner trays with outside vendors. Mulvihill explains that the solution has allowed his team to identify which loaner tray vendors are not complying with their policies on tray delivery. It also alerts them to late tray check ins.

"Utilizing this data we have been able to drive compliance with trays being delivered 24 hours or more before surgery," said Mulvihill. "We have seen our numbers in six months go from 20 percent to 30 percent of trays on time to 70 percent to 80 percent. Overall it has helped us better coordinate and reduce stress on the staff to ensure that everything needed for a case arrives appropriately."

## Placement counts

While surgical instrument tray prep is critically important, ensuring all instruments and supplies are accounted for post-surgery is equally essential to patient safety. The Joint Commission reports that unintended retained foreign objects (URFOs) are the most frequent sentinel event reported to its Sentinel Event database, with 115 URFOs reported in 2015, up from 102 in 2013.4

The practice of perioperative sponge, needle and instrument counts

can help prevent URFOs. The Joint Commission recommends that healthcare facilities standardize count policies for all procedures, not just those involving an open chest or abdomen. Count sheets help facilitate this but there have been questions about the safety of including printed sheets within wrapped trays or containers. The Association of periOperative Registered Nurses' (AORN) states:

"Count Sheets should not be placed inside wrapped sets or rigid containers. Although there are no known reports of adverse events related to sterilized count sheets, there is no available research regarding the safety of toners and/or various papers subjected to any sterilization method. Chemicals used in the manufacturer





Healthmark count sheet holders

of paper and toner ink pose a theoretical risk of reaction in some sensitized individuals."<sup>5</sup>

To address this challenge, Healthmark has developed a variety of count sheet holders that safely hold the sheets on the outside of sterilization trays. The company has two options for wrapped trays: a transparent poly front sheet holder with a medical grade paper back, and a medical grade paper pouch holder that adheres to the side of the wrapped

tray. For rigid sterilization containers Healthmark offers a slotted tray label that allows for the count sheet to be attached to the outside of a closed container. HPN

## Referendes

- 1. Surgery Setup: Making a Difference for People, Safety and Costs, https://www.virginiamasoninstitute.org/2016/10/surgery-setup-making-a-difference-for-people-safety-and-costs/
- 2. Standardization of operative equipment reduces cost J Pediatr Surg. 2013 Sep;48(9):1843-9. doi: 10.1016/j jpedsurg.2012.11.045. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov,pubmed/24074655
- 3. A Model of Cost Reduction and Standardization: Improved Cost Savings While Maintaining the Quality of Care. Dis Colon Rectum. 2015 Nov;58(11):1104-7. doi: 10.1097/DCR.00000000000000463. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26445185
- 4. Strategies to prevent URFOs, The Joint Commission, January 2016. https://www.jointcommission.org/assets/1/23/Quick\_Safety\_Issue\_20\_Jan\_2016.pdf
- 5. AORN 2011 Recommended Practices for Selection and Use of Packaging Systems for Sterilization Recommendation (IV #3)

