

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Incorrect Surgical Site

Summary:

The surgical procedure performed did not match that to which the patient provided written consent. The toe on which the surgery performed was different and an additional procedure was added on the day of surgery.

Keywords: safe surgical checklist, incorrect site

Device Name (if applicable):

Drug/Name/Fluid Name: (if applicable):

Type of Analysis: single event

Findings of the Review

- An additional surgical procedure was added to the scheduled surgical procedure on the morning of the surgery.
- A last minute change in operating room theatre assignments was required. This may have distracted those involved such that their routine practice of completing the surgical safety checklist was affected.

- During completion of the safe surgical checklist, there was lots of discussion regarding which surgical site to complete surgery on first. This discussion, along with other interruptions that occurred during completion of the three phases of the checklist may have contributed to the process being unfocused.
- The time-out phase of the safe surgical checklist was led by the nurse; however, policy designates the surgeon as the leader of the time-out phase.
- The surgeon marked the left foot prior to surgery but did not mark the specific toe that was to be operated on.
- Draping of the foot occurred prior to completion of the time out phase of the safe surgical checklist and resulted in the surgical site marking not being visible.

System Learning:

- Develop guidelines to assist staff and enhance communication among team members when additional procedures are added on to previously scheduled patients.
- Discuss this event at unit meeting for shared learning and require the involvement of management to facilitate room assignments when changes are required.
- Revise the safe surgical checklist, policy/procedure to support greater focus and enhanced communication among team members by:
 - Delaying start time of procedure if full participation of all team members in the time-out phase is not achieved and
 - Completing separate time out phase of the safe surgical checklist for each procedure when a patient has more than one procedure scheduled.
- Determine and implement best practice regarding the safest time to complete the time out phase of the safe surgical checklist in relation to draping of the surgical site and ways to prevent the potential of obscuring site markings.

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