



Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital Uses Lean to Prepare for Processes in New Plaza Tower



**By Kelly Rinehart, RN, CNOR,
RNFA, CPHRM**

**Executive Consultant, Institute for
Performance Excellence & Medical
Risk Consulting**

In December 2012, Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital (PIH) will move certain services into their new Plaza Tower. Preparing for such a move is always a challenge requiring planning and training right up to move-in day. The expansion of surgical services and changes in the way they currently admit patients presented the opportunity to design new processes as well as standardize the old ones incorporating Lean methods to decrease waste and improve patient flow throughout the entire surgical experience.

Standardizing Complex Processes

A Lean surgical team, led by a Lean facilitator, was formed to work for six months on process mapping, appropriate utilization of existing staff, metrics and standardization of work processes. Work and patient flow processes were

developed using blueprints of the surgical department.

Among anticipated changes are the ways information and patients flow through the area. The increased size of the new surgical area would pose a challenge for communication between staff. A large central area seemed to lend itself to the development of a core “team” to help streamline the flow. Consisting of an RN, tech, orderlies, environmental services, and a case coordinator, this team will be the eyes and ears for the OR charge nurse and will be responsible for maintaining the flow of patients in and out of operating room suites. (Figures 1 and 1a.)

Patient admissions will also be impacted by the new surgical area. In the current flow, patients are admitted into a short-stay unit before surgery or on the medical-surgical floors if admitted after surgery. In the new process (Figures 2 and 2a), patients will be admitted directly to an admissions area in the surgical department. There, they will be prepped for

The Institute for Performance Excellence (IPE) provides performance improvement consulting, training and research for health care organizations. For more information about IPE, please contact: (213) 538-0700 or email Kelly Rinehart at krinehart@medriskconsulting.com.

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surgery and taken directly to the surgical suite for their procedure.

Timely surgical procedures are critical to the flow of the operating room. When a patient arrives with incomplete orders, it delays the admission process and creates late start times for the operating room. To help ensure they are ready for the procedure, patients are required to visit a pre-admissions nurse. The nurse checks physician orders for all required tests and documents, and provides valuable education for the patient. If the patient needs tests, the lab, radiology and EKG departments are readily available. A standardized workflow map for this admission area identifies who does what and when so that the patient is ready on time for their surgical procedure.

“Ultimately by using Lean methods, our staff’s workflow was streamlined resulting in more efficient, seamless and high-quality care for patients.” —

PIH President and Chief Executive Officer Jim West

Adding Value through Standardization

Any high-risk environment can benefit from standard operating procedures (SOPs) and the consistency of quality that can come from eliminating variation. While commonly applied to complex tasks in the military, airline and nuclear power industries, standardization can also be applied to even the most basic tasks. Using the 5S method (Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize, Sustain), the Lean team can sort old equipment, streamline instrument trays and case cards, and determine what items will be moved to the new tower and what will be donated or discarded.

There are many more everyday examples of SOPs: recipes, how-to instructions and even the simple instructions shown in Figure 3. Consistency in

training new staff is another value-added benefit of SOPs. The SOPs created by the PIH staff will be excellent references when they move into their new work areas.

SOPs, handoff tools, checklists, algorithms, etc., can be created for current procedures and modified for the new future state. Each SOP will go through a Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) process to ensure they work as intended. Training and implementing SOPs before the move provides staff with a standardized frame from which to work and will make the process easier in the new environment.

One month prior to opening the new tower, the surgery department staff will simulate the new workflows to gather time and efficiency data. Any necessary adjustments to processes can be made to ensure everything works smoothly on opening day. PIH has committed to continuous daily improvement and will further enhance the processes as they acclimate to their new environment.



About Kelly Rinehart

Kelly specializes in providing customized Lean health care services for health care providers and organizations, with a focus on clinical risk management, quality and patient safety improvements, culture training,

Lean health care coaching, disclosure of adverse event training, root cause analysis, and the evaluation and design of risk management and patient safety programs. Kelly is a popular speaker for physicians and medical staff alike, conducting Patient Safety Workshops for physicians in Oregon, Idaho and Washington discussing issues such as patient hand-offs, disclosure of adverse events and claims review analysis.

For more information about IPE, please contact (213) 538-0700 or email Kelly at krinehart@medriskconsulting.com

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Effective Lean implementation allows the various stakeholders to agree on a documented workflow. These figures offer examples of workflow charts and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Figure 1: OR Core Workflow

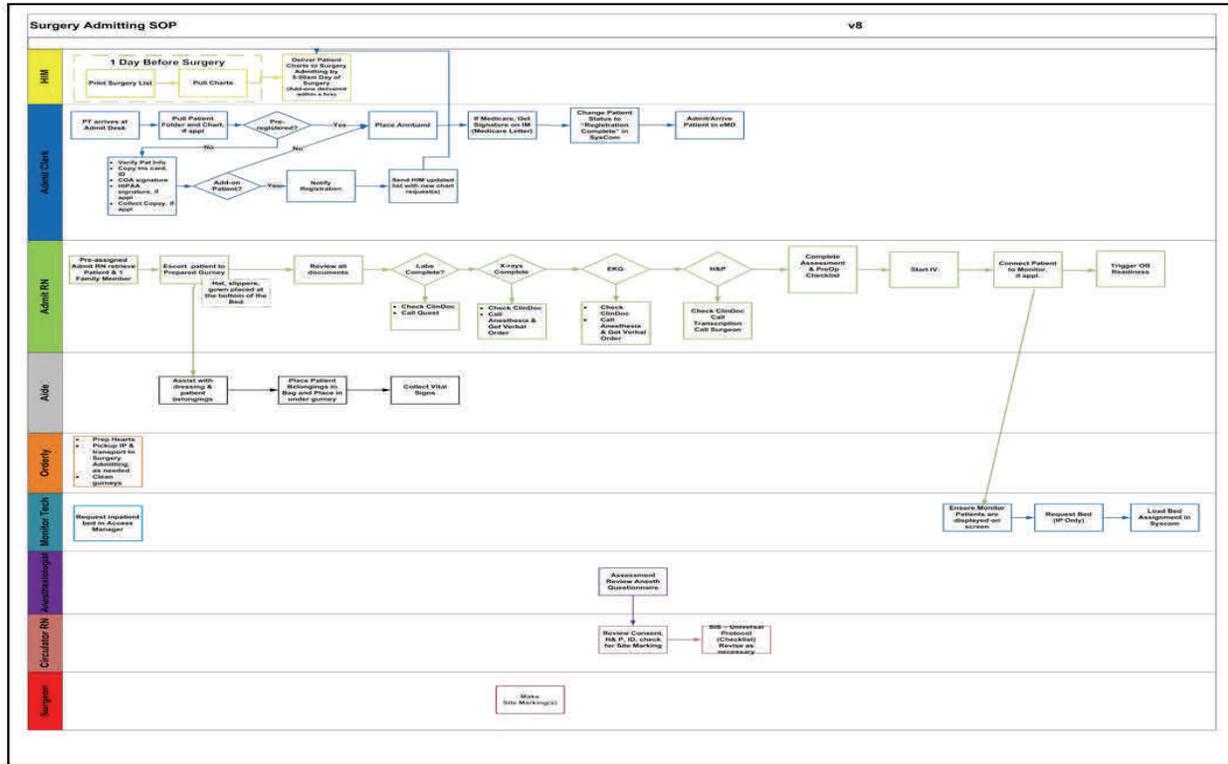


Figure 1a: Close-up of OR Core Workflow

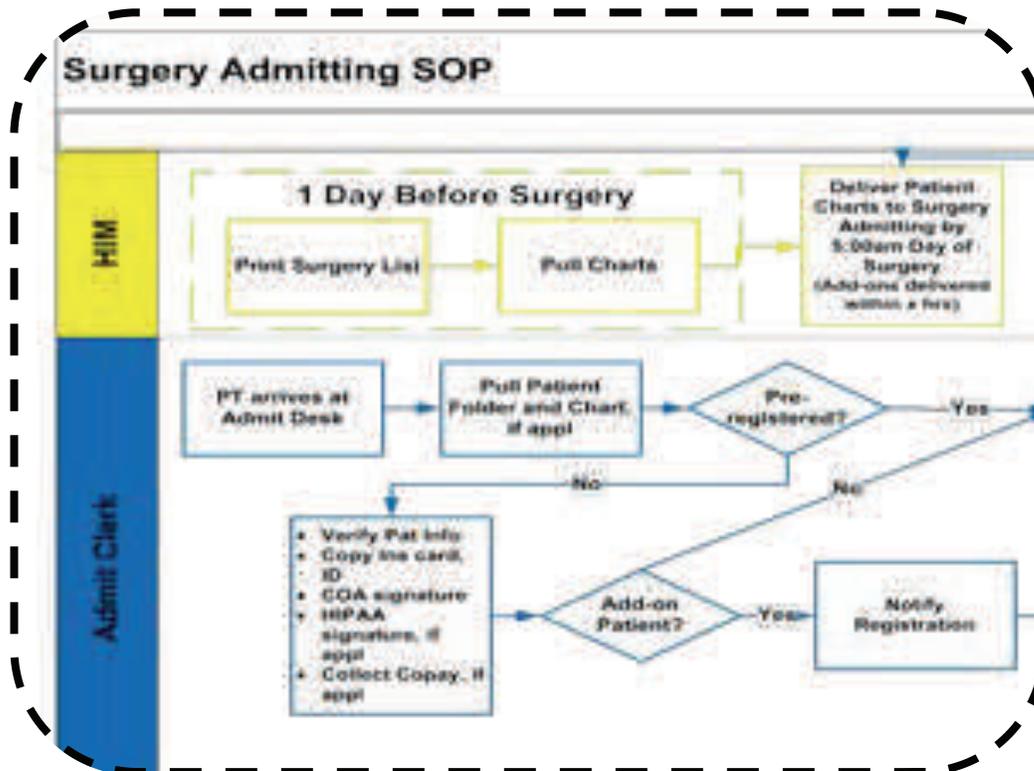


Figure 2: Admissions Workflow

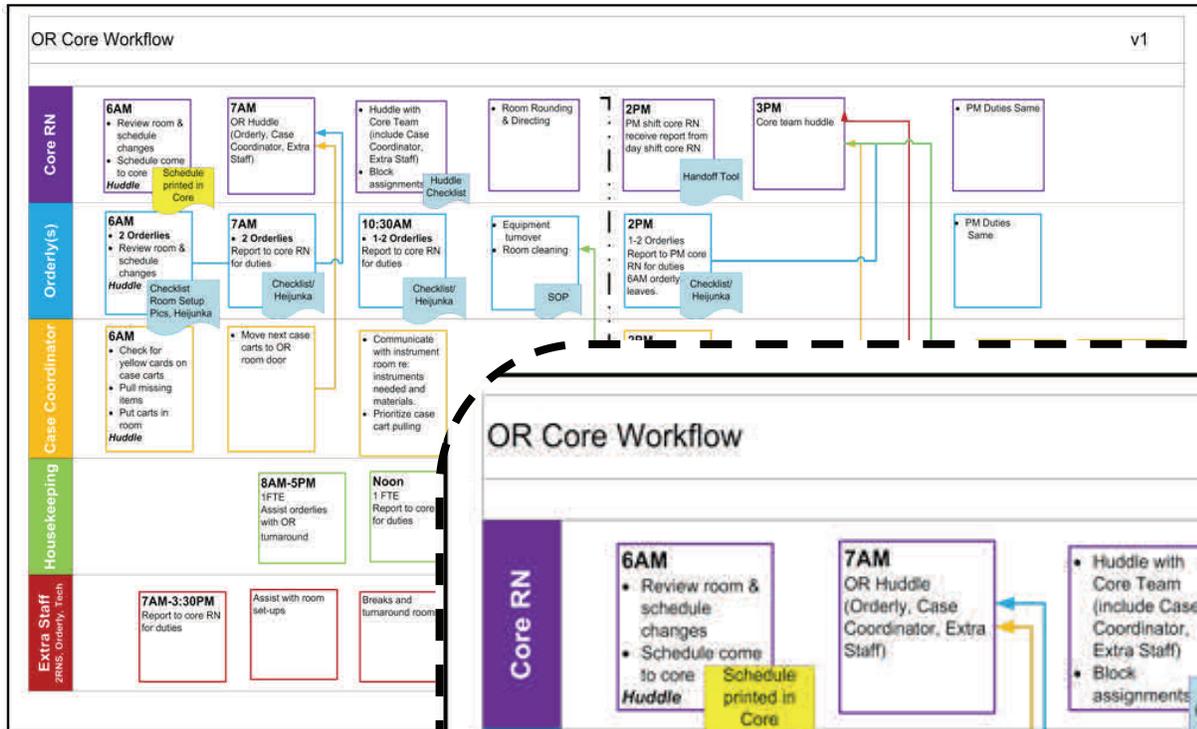


Figure 2a: Close-up of Admissions Workflow

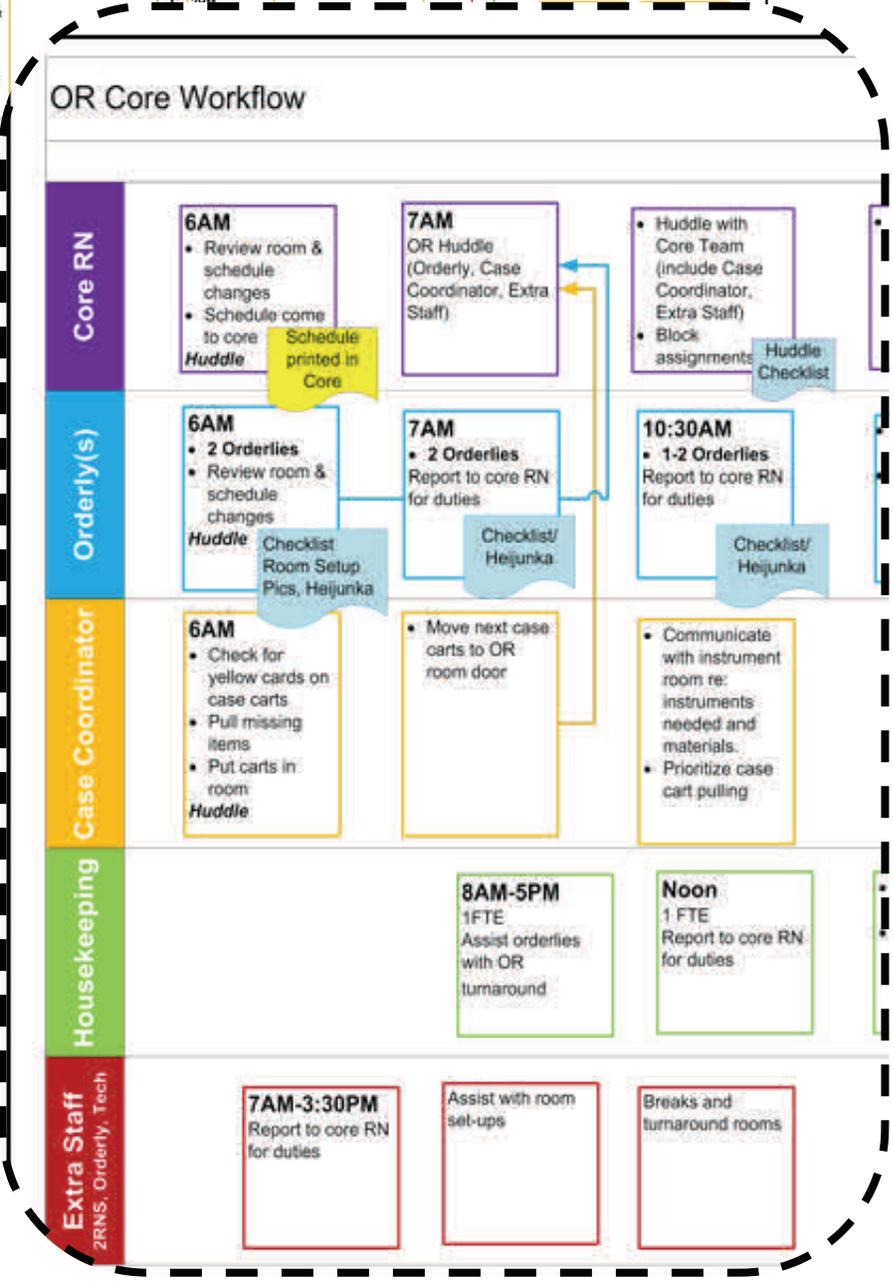


Figure 3: Example of a Standard Operating Procedure

SOP – BREAK ROOM CLEANLINESS

Overview

This document will cover the steps required to ensure a clean break room sink and dishwasher.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to formalize break room cleaning procedures to minimize germs and ensure a clutter free environment.

Procedure

1. If dishwasher is not running and marked as dirty, rinse dish of debris and place in dishwasher.
2. If dishwasher is not running and marked as clean, empty dishwasher and place all contents in proper locations. Then rinse the dirty dish of debris and place in dishwasher.
3. If dishwasher is running, clean dish and return to proper location or wait until dishwasher run cycle is complete, empty dishwasher, rinse dish of debris, and place in dishwasher. Change sign from "clean" to "dirty".



Dishes are NOT to be left in the sink at any time. You and your guest's dishes are your responsibility.