BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS : Strengthening Teams to Optimize Surgical Efficiency

PATRICIA BARRY GODINO MSN, RN, CNOR
ASHLEY BELLEAU MSN, RN, CNOR

Beth Israel Lahey Health
Winchester Hospital

Winchester Hospital's perioperative leadership team- ACNO of Surgical Services, OR nurse manager, nurse educator, including the clinical nurses, and frontline perioperative team members led a comprehensive, multidisciplinary effort to improve surgical efficiency, staff retention, and education. This collaborative team approach fostered an inclusive, engaged, and empowered staff culture, improving both clinical and operational outcomes.

Assessment

Metric (July 2022)	Baseline Data	Key Findings
RN Turnover Rate	6.9%	High turnover, limited engagement
First Case On-Time Start Rate	32%	Inefficiencies in communication and preparation
OR Turnover <30 minutes	29%	Workflow and preference card issues

Additional Findings:
- Outdated preference cards
- Disengaged staff with minimal involvement in hiring/improvement efforts
- Workflow, communication, and education gaps identified via EPIC, OneBILH, and Vizient data

Preparation and Planning

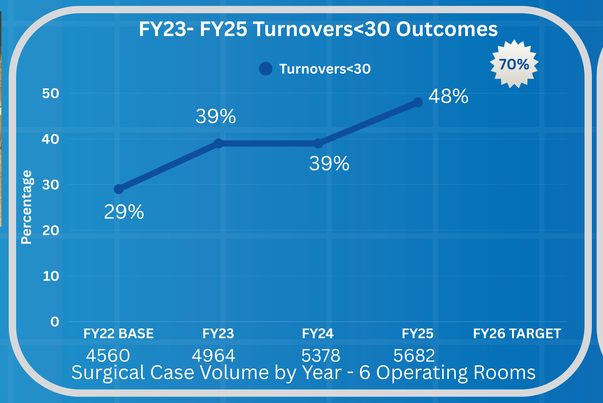
In response to high turnover and workflow inefficiencies identified through internal metrics and staff feedback, Winchester implemented a structured, data-informed action plan aligned with AORN's Orientation, Education, and Competency Assessment guideline and principles from *"5 Ways to Enhance Operating Room Efficiency"*:

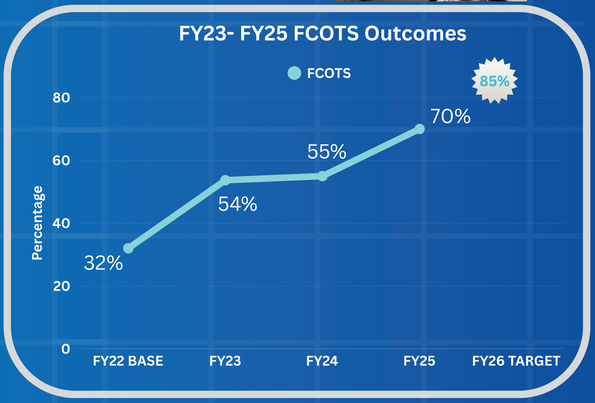
1. Streamlining scheduling
2. Standardizing procedures and protocols
3. Enhancing communication
4. Optimizing inventory management
5. Investing in staff education and training

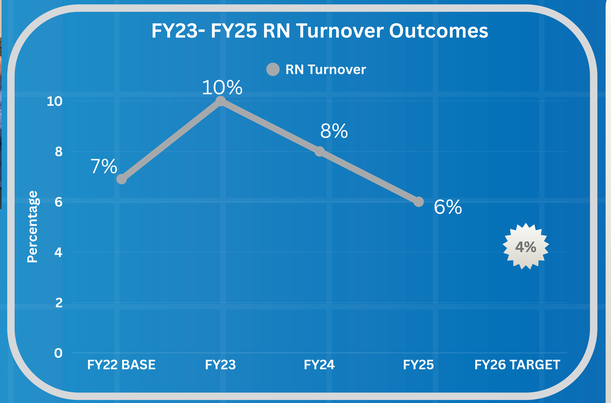
Planning emphasized:
- Shared governance–based interview and onboarding process
- Updated staff education initiatives
- Workflow improvements informed by real-time data analysis

Implementation

- **Streamlining scheduling**
  - Updated blocktime schedules to evenly distribute case load
  - Second Robot relocated to offsite surgery center
- **Standardizing procedures and protocols**
  - Workflow for the new Hybrid room developed
  - Patient admission process redesigned
  - Post-surgical cleanup product changed to a gel instrument pre-cleaner
- **Enhancing communication**
  - 6:45am OR team huddle
  - Daily multidisciplinary huddle
  - Added"just do its" for workflow alignment with Epic
- **Optimizing inventory management**
  - Staff provided feedback on layout and information needed
  - Supply cart locations remapped
  - Labeled all supplies, including reorder information for more streamlined workflow
  - Established PAR levels and added electronic processing, reducing turnaround time
  - Standardized products resulting in a reduction of SKUs
- **Investing in staff education and training**
  - Offered multiple no cost CNOR prep courses
  - 50% of nurses are now CNOR certified; 19 additional nurses are preparing for certification
  - Engagement activities including mock codes, fire drills, scavenger hunts and equipment specific education
  - Operating Room ACLS Training, making the class more accessible for staff
  - TeamStepps for improved collaboration and communication
- **Staff retention**
  - Revised shared governance hiring model, engaging nurses in interviews and peer shadowing
  - Increased core staff, eliminating agency as of May 2023
  - Peri-op 101 offered 3 times per year
  - Creative shifts replaced "on call" weekends and nights with in-house staff
  - Team building activities







Outcomes

Focus Area	Result	Impact
Staff retention	Turnover significantly decreased	Increased engagement and satisfaction
Certification	Majority CNOR certified	Elevated professional standards
Efficiency	Improved first case on time starts	Clearer roles and standardized protocols
Workflow	Updated preference cards	Enhanced accuracy and reduced delays
System Alignment	Real-time communication with Epic	Improved coordination and scheduling

Overall, OR efficiency trended positively toward BILH's 2025 performance targets.

Implications for Perioperative Nursing

This initiative demonstrates the power of a data-driven, team-based approach aligned with AORN standards and national best practices. Winchester's model underscores the importance of:

- Empowering perioperative nurses through shared governance
- Investing in education and certification
- Fostering collaboration and accountability to sustain operational excellence and optimize patient outcomes