

# Case Cart Auditing tool

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## Background

Effective surgical table breakdown and proper transfer of instrument trays to the Sterile Processing Department (SPD) are critical to patient safety and workflow efficiency. Prior to this project, recurring issues were identified, including improper table breakdown, incomplete removal of sharps and single-use devices, inconsistent use of enzymatic spray, and insufficient inspection for bioburden or damaged instruments.

These inconsistencies contributed to SPD delays, increased risk of instrument damage, and potential compromise in reprocessing quality. A standardized process was needed to promote adherence to established policies and ensure safe and efficient instrument handling after each procedure.

Table breakdown

Inspection

Enzymatic Spray

## Objective

The purpose of the Case Cart Auditing Tool is to ensure perioperative staff consistently follow established table breakdown protocols and comply with Manufacturer Instructions for Use (MIFU).

### Project goals include:

- Standardizing post-procedure tray preparation
- Improving quality and completeness of trays sent to SPD
- Reducing errors related to instrument handling
- Supporting safe, efficient reprocessing
- Enhancing overall patient safety through improved instrument readiness



## Methods

A 14-question auditing tool was created to evaluate key behaviors in post-procedure instrument handling. The audit assesses adherence to MIFU, correct application of enzymatic spray, removal and disposal of sharps and single-use items, inspection for visible bioburden or damage, and overall tray organization prior to transport.

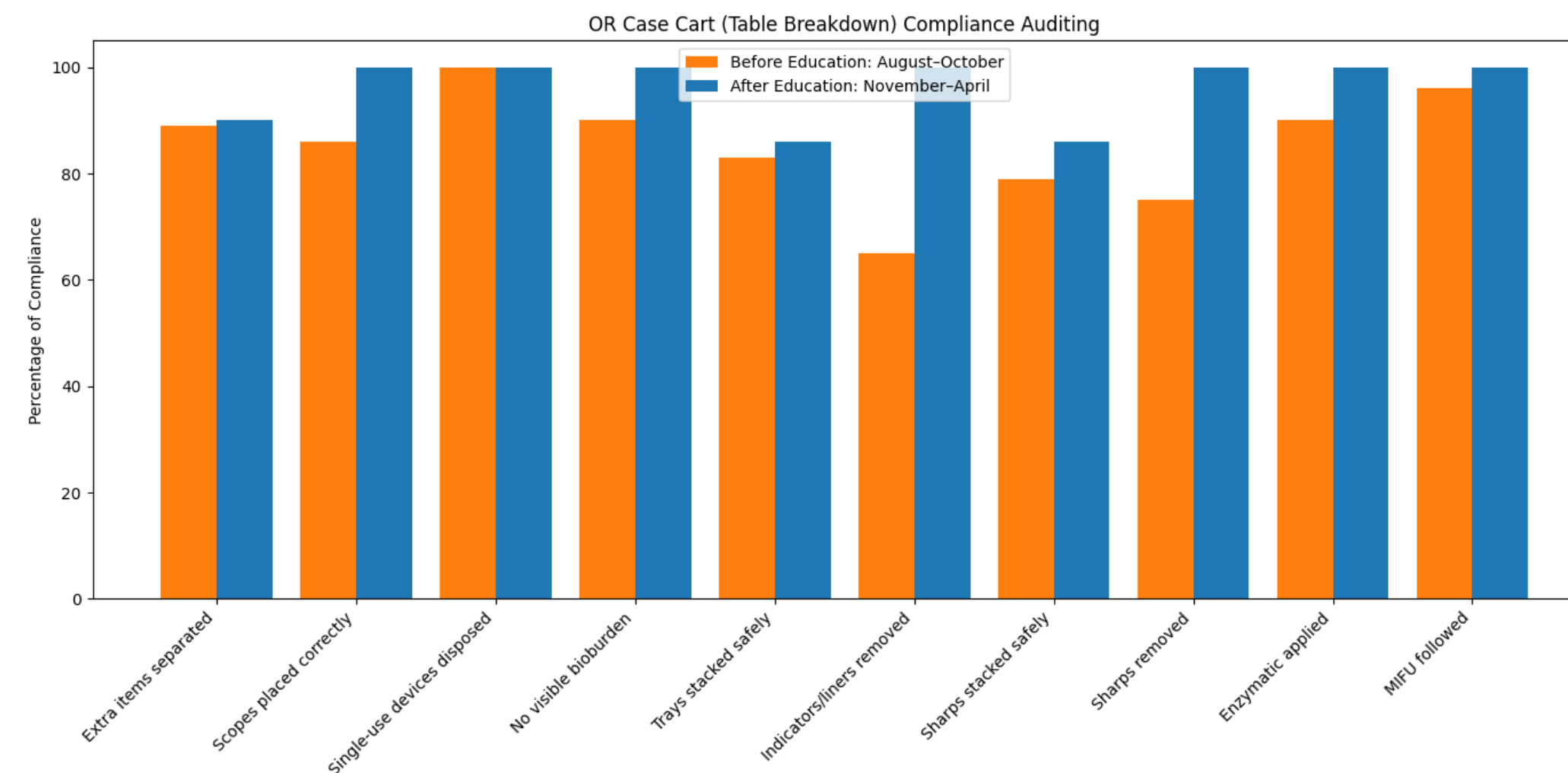
Audits are completed **in real time** by observers who evaluate staff at the point of use. Immediate corrective education is provided when deficits are identified, reinforcing policy expectations and supporting just-in-time learning. Audit data is collected continuously to monitor trends, guide education, and identify areas requiring additional support.

## Outcomes

Since implementation of the Case Cart Auditing Tool, there has been a noticeable improvement in the quality and consistency of trays arriving to SPD.

Staff are demonstrating stronger adherence to table breakdown policies, and trays show fewer issues related to bioburden, retained sharps, and improper organization.

Immediate coaching has increased staff accountability and reinforced correct practices. SPD staff report more predictable workflow and fewer reprocessing delays. Data collection is ongoing, and early findings indicate the tool is an effective mechanism for improving compliance and supporting safe, efficient instrument turnover.



## Conclusion

The Case Cart Auditing Tool has strengthened adherence to post-procedure instrument handling standards and improved the consistency of trays received by SPD. Ongoing audits continue to identify key opportunity areas such as consistent removal of single-use items, proper use of enzymatic spray, and MIFU adherence which guide targeted education and future quality initiatives. Continued monitoring will support sustained improvement, promote safe practice, and enhance collaboration between the OR and SPD.



## References

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