



# TIME OUT STANDARDIZATION: "IT ONLY TAKES A MINUTE"

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## Background

Time Out is the final step in The Joint Commission's Universal Protocol. Standardizing the Time Out Process improves effectiveness (AORN, 2021).

### Department Significance

- Pre-project implementation baseline data showed Time-Outs were conducted 100% of the time, however the process was inconsistent.
- Key elements varied, revealing no standardized approach, posing a potential patient safety risk for wrong site, procedure, or person errors.
- 100% of staff surveyed revealed there was no standardization of Time Out process
- Baseline data showed 23% overall compliance addressing all Time Out elements, with individual element compliance ranging from 53% to 93%.

## Objective

The objective of this project is to achieve 100% compliance in performing a standardized Time Out process, addressing all identified elements prior to the start of each surgical procedure.

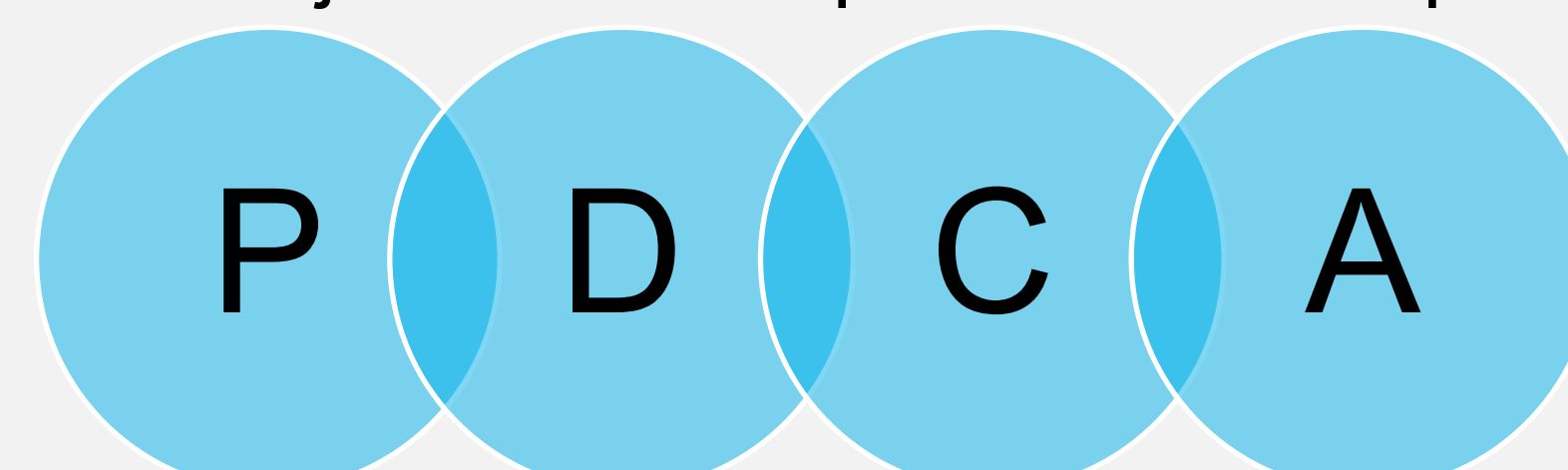
## Gap Analysis

The gap analysis showed multiple areas of opportunities in current practice:

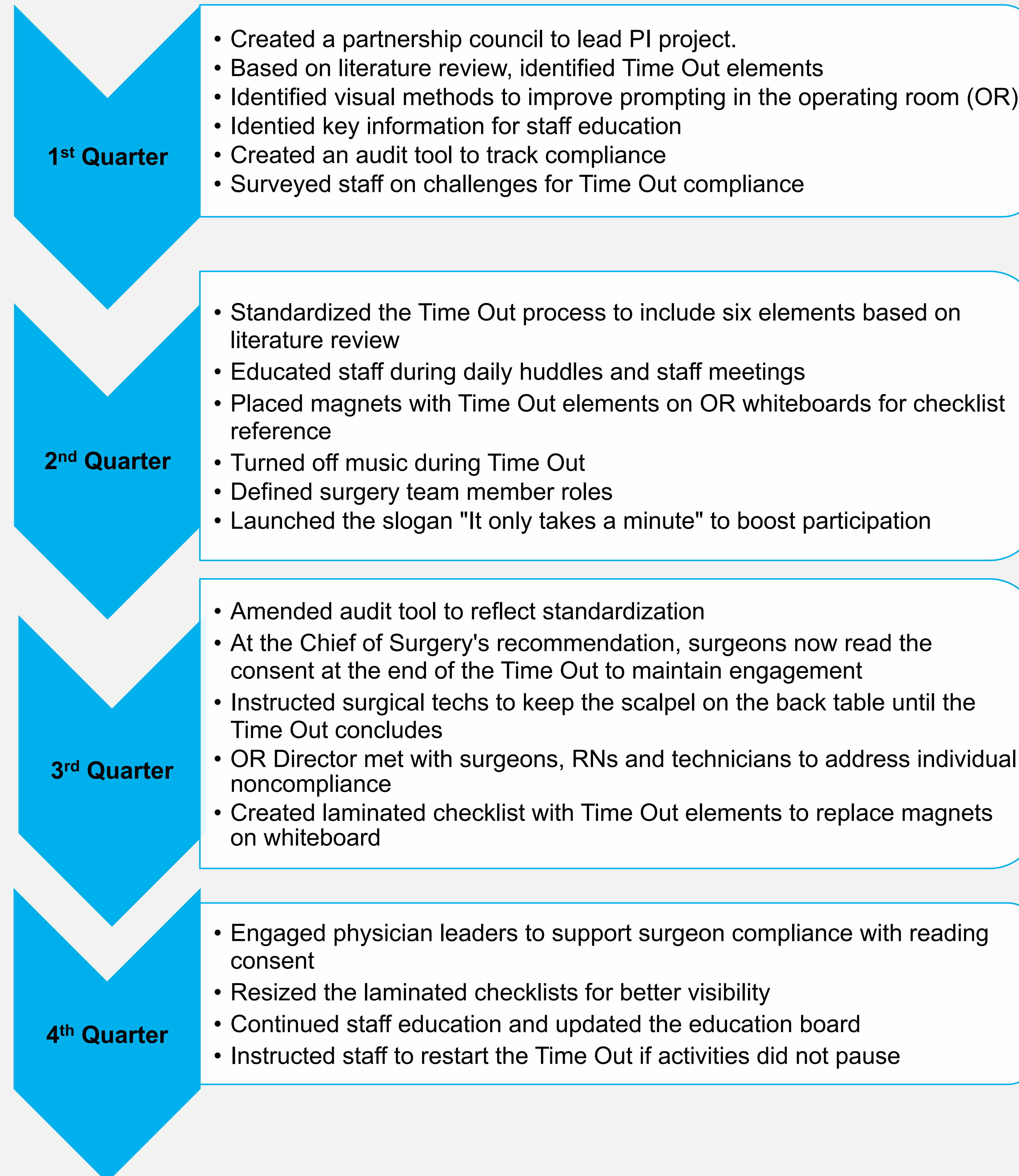
- Lack of a standardized Time Out process
- Confusion about roles and responsibilities among team members
- Surgeons refusing to read the consent
- Failure to suspend activities during the Time Out and lack of team participation
- Registered nurses (RNs) feeling rushed or intimidated by surgeons to complete the process.

## Method

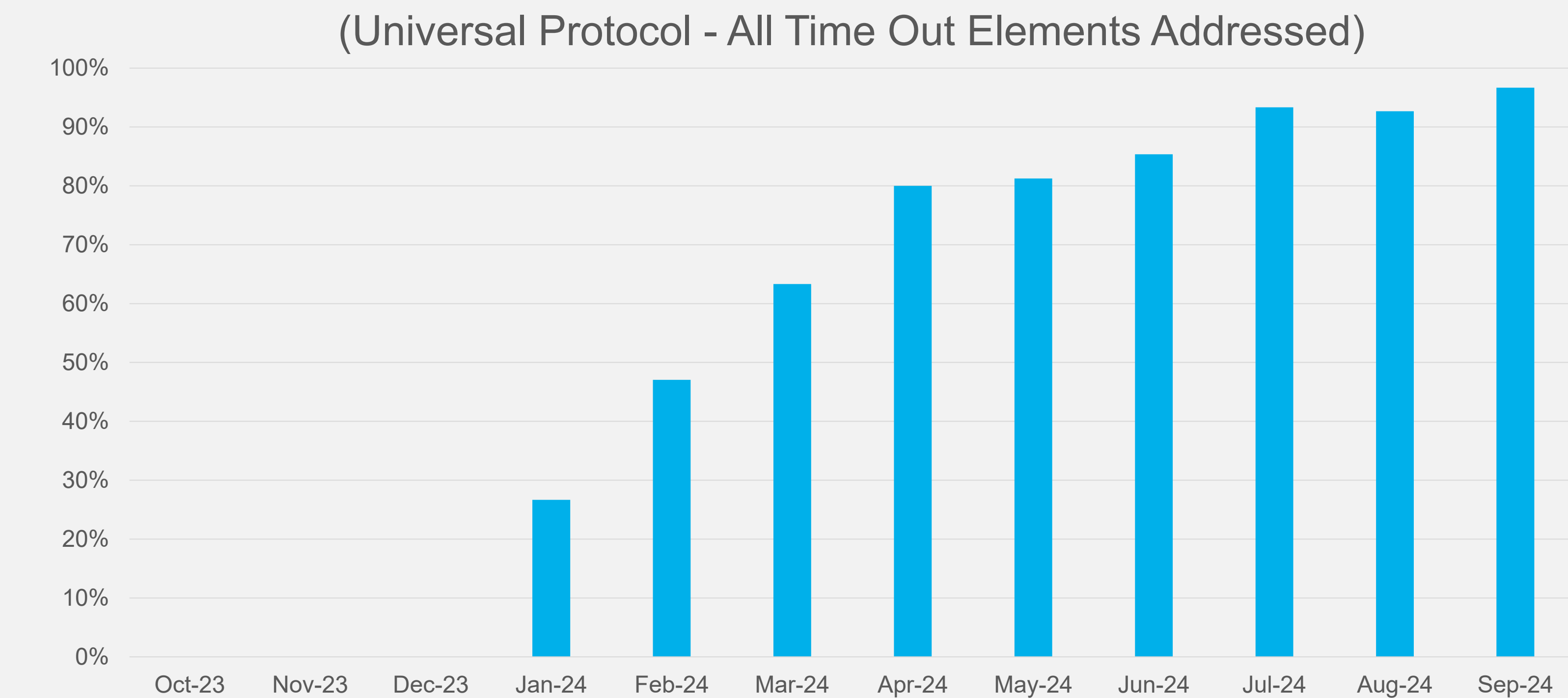
The Plan-Do-Check-Act method was used throughout each quarter to implement change and achieve the objective of this performance improvement (PI) project.



## Implementation



## User-Centered Results



## Evidence-Based Interventions

- Evidence 1: Standardization of the Time Out process (AORN, 2021)
- Evidence 2: Involve all members of the perioperative team (Croke, 2019)
- Evidence 3: Stopping all unnecessary activities and conversations when the Time Out is called (AORN 2020)
- Evidence 4: Discussing any patient safety concerns or concerns about the procedure during the Time Out (Croke, 2019)
- Evidence 5: Perform the Time Out immediately before starting an invasive procedure or making the first incision (TJC, 2024)

## Key Outcomes

- Define Time Out roles for the anesthesiologist, surgeon, RN, and surgical technician
- Enlist leaders to support sustained compliance
- Create a Time Out checklist with good visibility
- Survey staff and physicians on challenges and barriers and gather feedback
- Promptly address any recurring non-compliance with targeted interventions