



A Focus on Clinical Quality Excellence in Anesthesia Services

How Unlocking the Complexity of Anesthesia Services
Can Achieve Maximum Efficiencies

Clinical quality excellence in anesthesia services maximizes OR efficiencies and achieves desired productivity and outcomes.

Hospital executives face many challenges. Decreasing reimbursements, rising supply and labor costs, and expanding regulatory requirements are continually testing the skills of hospital management. With evolving clinical standards, satisfying mandates for quality measurements and improvement is difficult. Add to the mix the health care reform law, and the future for hospitals is one of change and uncertainty.

The survival of today's hospitals depends on how well management balances the financial, administrative and quality performance of their staff. One method for achieving a positive return on investment (ROI) is to establish the hospital's operating room (OR) as a center of excellence. As reported by the Clinical Advisory Board, 65 percent of a hospital's profit and 60 to 70 percent of hospital revenue originates from the OR. While a hospital's anesthesiology program is an important support service to a number of hospital programs it is a vital component of perioperative services.¹

Effective management of anesthesia services plays a pivotal role in achieving excellence in the OR. This white paper examines what drives value in the OR and how focusing on clinical quality excellence in anesthesia services is an effective technique for maximizing OR efficiencies.

Trends in Health Care

Before developing strategies for maximizing OR efficiencies, it is important to consider the effect of recent trends in health care.

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“We do not yet have many quality areas with generally accepted measures established. Pioneers in this work will have to validate their own measures much of the time.”

*James Mortimer,
former President, Midwest
Business Group on Health*

In 1980, health care spending was \$253 billion. By 2008, that spending increased more than eight times to \$2.3 trillion.² Consumers, employers and the government demanded change.

The hospital industry also went through dramatic changes, including the rapid expansion of multiple hospital systems, including government, investor-owned and non-profits.

The fallout from skyrocketing health care costs and other industry trends contributed to the modern-day challenges for hospitals. Some of the most significant trends include:

- The “pay for performance” environment
- Staff shortages
- The economic downturn
- Health care reform

Pay for Performance

Introduced in the early 2000s, pay-for-performance (P4P) programs base payment arrangements on provider performance, and focus on both quality and cost-saving measures. Driven by employer coalitions,³ health plans and public programs, surveys estimate there are more than 100 programs in place.⁴