

# Improving and Transforming the OR for Value and Quality

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**SURGICAL**   
DIRECTIONS

In today's healthcare environment, success in the OR is about more than lowering costs. It's about teamwork, strong relationships between management and staff, coordination and stress management — all of which directly affect patient outcomes. Coordinating these cultural changes takes conscious and careful effort.

Although perioperative services account for 65 percent of a hospital's bottom line, numerous hospitals across the country experience challenges related to efficiency and culture in their operating rooms.

"You need to create cultural change, and the way you do it is through organizational models," Jeff Peters, president of Chicago-based Surgical Directions, said at Becker's Hospital Review's 4th Annual CEO+CFO/CIO Roundtable. "This is the key to transformation."

Culture is driven in numerous ways — particularly by effective leadership and improving productivity in the operating room. While surgeons require access, efficiency, safety and quality care, hospitals need overall productivity and value in the OR. It's key to find balance and meet the needs of both parties.

Mr. Peters highlighted two practices that organizations put into place to improve culture and productivity.

### **Daily huddles**

Daily team huddles include everyone from the OR director to the anesthesia department to the scheduling staff to ancillary services. During the huddle, the team evaluates its schedule for the next 48 hours. Reviewing the required equipment and supplies, the sequence of patients and staff assignments strengthens team confidence prior to the procedure and boosts quality of communication. By implementing daily huddles, hospitals have seen decreases in case delays and an 80 percent reduction of cancellations.

The effects of daily huddles can be seen in a case study from Beaumont Hospital-Royal Oak (Mich.). Just two years ago, the hospital was underperforming financially, clinically and operationally. “It had a low number of cases per OR and it didn’t have good tracking for on-time starts and turn-arounds,” said Mr. Peters. “Equally important, anesthesia didn’t play a key role in the OR.” After implementing daily huddles as part of its improvement plan, the hospital experienced a turnaround. Over a 14-month period, Beaumont-Royal Oak saw a 24 percent increase in volume and a \$20 million impact on net income.

### Sharing data

Data-driven decisions shape a culture, too. It’s critical to give physicians and care teams the tools they need to improve. For instance, Mr. Peters said New York City-based NYU Langone Medical Center’s Hospital for Joint Diseases improved its case time by making data more visible and accessible to the care team.

The hospital began to measure case time on a per-surgeon, per-case basis. It also implemented a physician scorecard each month, which measured various clinical outcomes such as surgical site infection rates for each surgeon. By directly addressing case times and utilizing data to help physicians, the hospital improved. “The trick is not just getting data to physicians, but also taking the time to help them understand the data,” said Mr. Peters.

### Conclusion

Using organizational models to bring about cultural change is crucial to transforming the culture in the operating room. Daily huddles and robust data-sharing are two strategies that have helped other healthcare organizations improve financial and operational performance, not to mention culture. If everyone is on board to help implement these changes, an operating room can successfully transform for value and quality.



### **About Surgical Directions**

Surgical Directions LLC is a national consulting firm based in Chicago that assists hospitals in improving the operational, financial, and market performance of perioperative and anesthesia services. Our consulting team is led by nationally-recognized, practicing anesthesiologists, surgeons, and surgical service professionals experienced in organizational design, block time, surgical scheduling, patient throughput, materials, staffing, strategic planning, and physician relations. Team members have successfully helped over 500 hospitals nationally increase surgical volume, improve clinical outcomes, improve surgeon satisfaction, improve anesthesia satisfaction, and enhance overall perioperative performance.