Interdisciplinary Team Training in Simulation to Enhance Communication and Patient Safety in the OR

The Problem

Closed claim analyses by CRICO show that:

- Surgery-related claims are the second most common;
- Clinical misjudgment, technical error and communication breakdowns are the most common contributing factors;
- Strategies are needed to improve communication, prevent errors, and mitigate consequences for surgical patients;
- Anesthesia and OB data suggest that high-fidelity simulation training may bring resilience to the surgical team and improve patient outcomes.

Aim/Goal

1. Use Faculty Hour to rapidly design and launch an interdisciplinary team training model with simulation;
2. Bring focused, evidence-based simulation training and debriefing to 12 interdisciplinary OR teams at BIDMC in 2010-2011.

The Team

M. Houstle, RN, BSN (Co-lead, Nursing)
J. Pawlowski, MD, PhD (Co-lead, Anesthesia)
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R. Bose, MBBS (Anesthesia)
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D. Fobert (SASC)
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C. Guglielmi, RN, MA, CNOR (Nursing)
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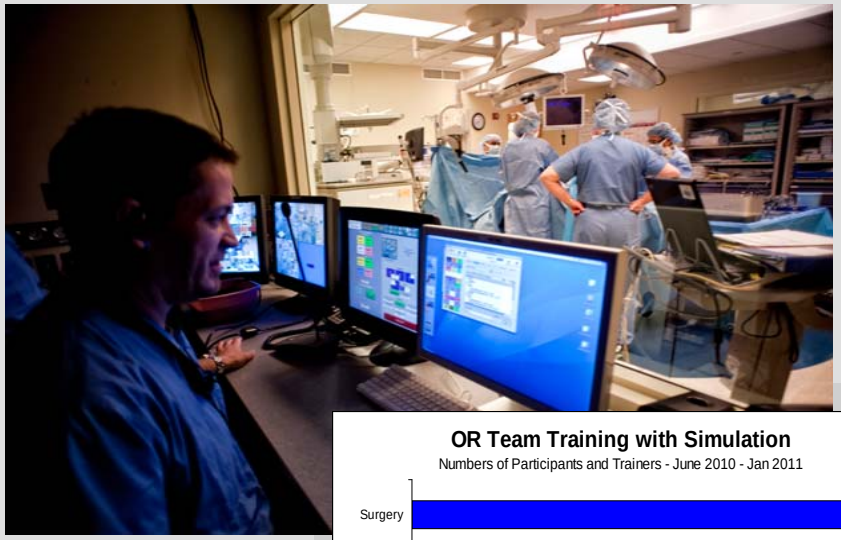
S. Johnson, MD (Surgery)
J. Keane, RN, CN-3 (Nursing)
M. McBride, RN (SASC)
J. Mitchell, MD (Anesthesia)
S. Muret-Wagstaff, PhD (Anesthesia)
D. Tavernelli, RN, RRT (SASC)
C. Vollmer, MD (Surgery)
M. Wyers, MD (Surgery)
D. Jones, MD (Co-lead, Surgery)

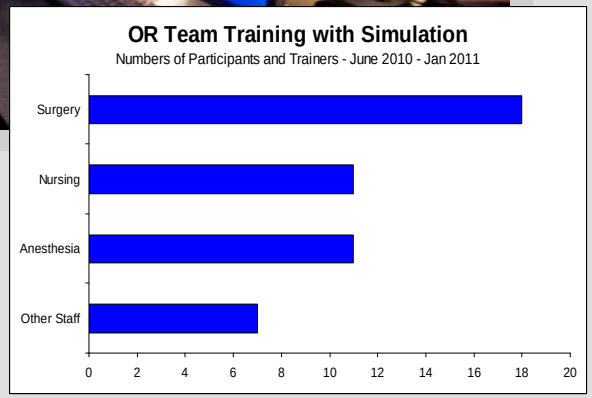
The Interventions

- Cross-departmental collaboration and a successful proposal to CRICO resulted in in-kind support and funding;
- The core team completed an intensive train-the-trainer course during 2 full days at the Center for Medical Simulation, HMS/HST, Cambridge, MA;
- The team used weekly Faculty Hour to develop 5-hour simulation sessions.
  Session objectives: Enable OR surgeons, nurses, anesthesiologists, and other staff to
  - Use hospital OR safety checklists effectively;
  - Consistently close the loop when communicating important information in both routine and emergent situations in the OR;
  - Feel empowered to speak up readily and effectively with information or concerns.

The Results/Progress to Date

BIDMC was the first Harvard hospital to launch the project. The team is ahead of schedule, has surpassed CRICO targets, and has conducted 6 training sessions.





Lessons Learned

Interdisciplinary teamwork is critical in the OR as well as in training approaches.

Next Steps

- The team conducts monthly debriefing and planning sessions during Faculty Hour to continuously improve training.
- A research agenda is underway to rigorously test the impact of training on team behavior and patient outcomes. Results will be used to revise and increase effectiveness and access to simulation-based team training.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center | A teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School | The Silverman Institute For Healthcare Quality and Safety

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