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Problem: Tendency to use the surgical safety checklist as a tick box exercise

Background: Surgical care is an essential component of worldwide healthcare. While surgical procedures are intended to save lives, unsafe surgical care can cause substantial harm. WHO Surgical Safety checklist is to be used by surgical teams within a perioperative environment. This checklist was tested, modified as per HMC requirement and implemented in Hamad General Hospital in 2013. The compliance with proper use of checklist is poor and steps need to be taken to engage perioperative healthcare providers in active manner and to reduce communication gap among the theatre teams.

Aim: To achieve 100% compliance with proper use of surgical safety checklist by December, 2014

Intervention:

- Formed a multidisciplinary quality lead team
- Making sure that every member of the team is involved in each step of the Checklist
- Measuring how reliably the Checklist is used for every person having surgery
- Developed an action plan to reinforce the proper use of Checklist
- Using a spread plan to support reinforcement across all theatres
- Education sessions for the surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses and O.R. technicians emphasizing the quality use of checklist

Conclusions: The challenges to implementation and sustainability are lack of clinical engagement, and a tendency to see the Checklist as a ‘tick box exercise’, rather than as a tool to enhance communication and teamwork. Also, Surgeons should be more involved with safety checklist.

Way Forward:

- Laminated checklists to act as a prompt
- Measuring reliability of quality use of checklist
- Recording use and impact

Results:

- Improved teamwork
- Improved safety
- More near misses captured
- Smoother / quicker procedures
- Improved staff morale

Compliance with the Surgical Checklist

