

Implementation Plan for Trialing Blunt Suture Needles

Create a multidisciplinary team with key stakeholders to include

- a team coordinator and
- team members, such as
 - the perioperative director;
 - the perioperative clinical educator;
 - representatives of front line workers (eg, RNs, OR technologists);
 - an infection control practitioner;
 - a risk manager;
 - the materials manager; and
 - one or more surgeon champions.

Collect information on conventional suture usage to include

- frequency of use,
- most commonly used sizes, and
- unique clinical needs to consider.

Review injury data from suture needles by asking key questions.

- When did the injury occur?
- Who was involved (eg, original user, secondary handler)?
- What type of activity was involved (eg, loading suture on a needle holder, passing suture from scrub person to surgeon, suturing, returning used suture to scrub person, disposing of the used sharp)?

Explain reasons to support conversion to blunt needles to include

- safety (ie, education starts with them):
 - surgeons;
 - residents; and
 - staff members (eg, circulating nurses, scrub personnel);
- cost of suture versus cost of needle stick injuries;
- decreased potential for injury from inadvertent needle-stick injuries by resident when suturing;
- fewer glove punctures as a of needle stick injuries; and
- piece of mind (ie, less chance of experiencing an injury and having to wait for bloodborne pathogen laboratory results).

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Set up the trial period by initiating key steps such as

- planning the timeline;
- having surgeon champions inform colleagues of pending trial evaluation;
- staging service lines; and
- using sales representatives to help implement the trial evaluation to include
 - providing on-site inservice education with teaching materials,
 - finding comparable suture and needle sizes and types for each procedure,
 - requesting free products for the trial evaluation,
 - assisting surgeons and scrub personnel with use of products and techniques, and
 - working with nursing staff members to update preference cards.

Communicate with all stakeholders by having

- surgeon champions coordinate with surgical chair persons regarding the blunt suture trial evaluation dates,
- team members communicate with perioperative and materials management staff members regarding trial evaluation and how it will work,
- materials management personnel stock selected blunt needle sutures and remove current products, and
- team members provide staff surgeons with evaluation sheets for completion during the trial evaluation.

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