

Alberta's Strategic Clinical Networks

Safe Surgery Checklist

The Goal

Safe Surgery Checklist is a communication tool for the surgical team – including the patient – to reduce the number of preventable errors and adverse events.

Adapted from the World Health Organization checklist in 2009, the Safe Surgery Checklist has already resulted in many “good catches”, such as allergies, demonstrating the value of this tool in ensuring safe surgical care is provided to all Albertans.

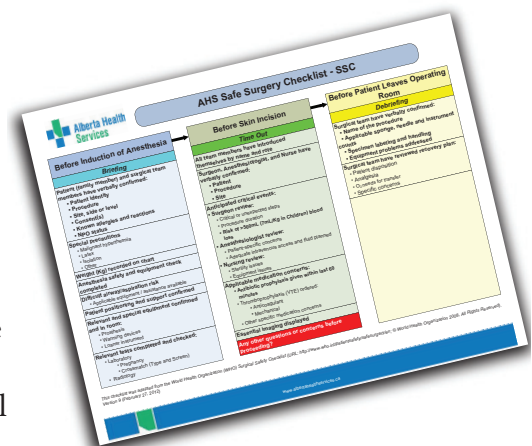


The Process

The checklist ensures critical information is shared between all members of the surgical team during three phases of surgery:

- Briefing before anesthesia
- Time out before incision
- Debriefing before going to the recovery room

By improving communication between all members of the care team members during these three phases of surgery, the Safe Surgery Checklist in turn improves safety and reduces potential complications for patients. The Surgery SCN is conducting focus groups to better understand the barriers and enablers to full participation with the checklist.



An online module has been created and almost 200 auditors have completed training to date.

The Outcome

Currently, approximately 90 per cent of surgeries in Alberta are compliant with the checklist.

The Safe Surgery Checklist will eventually be used for every surgery across the province. Use of the checklist is improving patient safety, resulting in better communication among the surgical team – including the patient – and measurably reducing and preventing potential surgical errors such as the side or location of surgery, patient allergies to medications and missing or incorrect surgical supplies.

The Team

This project transitioned to operations in December 2014. The Surgery Strategic Clinic Network (SCN) continues to work collaboratively with the Zones and others to monitor and improve participation.