

Accelero Helps Develop an Outpatient Total Joint Program in an ASC Setting



Program leads to increases in room utilization rates, high patient, surgeon and staff satisfaction and exceptional customer experience and all in a cost effective manner.

■ AT A GLANCE

- Surgeon owned Orthopedic Specialty ASC in the Pacific Northwest
- 19 physician owners, 8 performing Total Knee and Hip Replacement cases in two local hospitals
- 6 operating rooms in a state-of-the-art facility

■ ISSUES

- Surgeon owners wanted to perform outpatient total joint replacements at their ASC
- Low operating room utilization rates at the ASC

■ RESULTS

Our consulting group partnered with the ASC to develop and implement an Outpatient Total Joint Replacement program.

INTRODUCTION

This ASC is the largest full service orthopedic group in their region of the Pacific Northwest. The surgeons were performing general orthopedic cases in the ASC but no joint replacements. With room for growth there was a desire to offer outpatient joint replacement surgery to select patients. Joint replacement patients were currently having their procedures at one of two local hospitals with an average length of stay of 2-3 days.

FINDINGS

Their current ASC environment presented challenges for implementing a joint replacement program. Our consultants were engaged to identify opportunities for improvement and to implement an Outpatient Total Joint Replacement Program to achieve successful outcomes and an create an exceptional experience for the patient.

Due to low room utilization rates, there was ample opportunity to add joint replacement cases to the schedule. One of the challenges included the fact that their long-tenured staff did not have recent experience in joint replacement surgery or in educating, preparing and recovering total joint replacement patients. The facility had the regulatory ability and physical plant to keep patients for a 23 hour observation period, but the current staffing model did not support overnight stays. The patient rooms were adequate at best however they lacked the desired amenities that patients experienced in the hospital environment.

Since joint replacement cases had never been performed at this ASC before, they also lacked the necessary equipment and instruments to do the cases and, there were no standardized processes in place for proper room turnover and cleaning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the assessment, a comprehensive plan was created to allow for development of a safe, effective, successful outpatient total joint replacement program in an ASC setting. The key recommendations included:

Standardize clinical delivery systems and process using evidence-based best practices

After establishing patient selection criteria, our consulting group then worked with the surgeons and the anesthesia providers to develop standardized order sets and clinical pathways that enabled the patient to return home safely and comfortably within a few hours after surgery. Protocols were developed with physical therapy and nursing as well as development of an emergency plan, discharge plan and follow-up phone calls to ensure that patients are doing well and have no needs.

Develop Staff Training in Joint Replacement Procedures

Working with the surgeons and nurse leaders, areas of need were identified and specific competencies were developed to train the staff on total joint replacement. A series of workshops were created for nurses and techs to develop standardized processes for room setup, prepping and draping and cleaning and turnover. Educational competency sessions were developed for preoperative, intraoperative and post operative staff to ensure quality, safe, effective care for these patients.

Additional recommendations included hiring a nurse navigator specifically for joint replacement patients and establishing specific patient education materials for the program.

Create the Ideal Patient Experience and Patient Education

Staff and physicians mapped out the ideal patient flow and amenities to create an experience that exceeded the competition. The success of a same day joint replacement program lies in the correct patient selection, education, and preparation. Our Consultants worked closely with staff to develop comprehensive education materials.

SUMMARY

Developing an outpatient total joint program in an ASC setting requires a multidisciplinary approach with defined goals and objectives.

With the help of our consultants this ASC launched a strategic, well-planned program that will lead to high quality, safe care, increase in room utilization rates, high patient, surgeon and staff satisfaction, an exceptional customer experience and all in a cost effective manner. During the first 6 months of implementation, they have experienced a 0% complication rate, no hospitalizations or ED visits, and no patients have required an overnight stay.