



# From Goat Rodeo to Standard Process: A Shared Governance Approach to Optimization of a Count Sheet

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## Introduction

- In 2021 through 2022, significant staff shortages led to an increase in rapid hiring of novice as well as temporary operating room nurses and surgical technologists
- As the level of experienced staff decreased, there was a noted increase in reported safety events related to incorrect counts
- The current process of manual counting involved a count sheet which did not meet the demands of new surgical techniques and encouraged variations in practice
- Pre-populated numbers and concurrent circling of these numbers did not favor correct addition of sharps, sponges and miscellaneous items
- The Perioperative Leadership team looked to the Operating Room Shared Governance Council to create a new standardized count sheet to decrease safety events related to incorrect counts

## Objectives

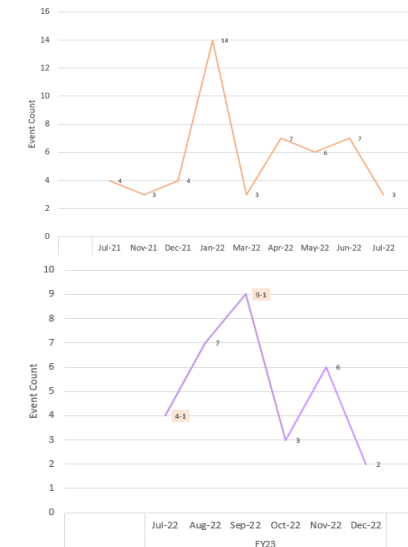
- Develop a new count sheet utilizing a collaborative shared governance approach
- Integrate the AORN Guidelines for Perioperative Practice into manual counting processes

## Methods

- Solicited feedback for items deemed necessary for the revised count sheet and compared count sheets from other entities
- Drafts were presented to Shared Governance with the elimination of pre-populated numbers. Created a final draft
- Final draft presented to staff for a one-week pilot study; longer, complex cases were prioritized
- Survey was provided for staff via QR code directly on the trial count sheet to provide feedback during pilot study
- Results from survey were reviewed to make changes to the count sheet and the final version was released

## Results

The new count sheet was instituted in May of 2022, which has shown a 25% improvement in surgical counts as compared to six-month, pre-intervention data



## Discussion

- Standardization of practice with surgical count sheets can help to decrease miscounts
- The shared governance approach to problem solving ensures feedback is gathered from a variety of sources, particularly the end-user clinical staff
- Formative evaluation of process changes assists in gathering meaningful data

## References

- Rowlands, A., & Steeves, R. (2010). Incorrect surgical counts: a qualitative analysis. *AORN journal*, 92(4), 410-419.
- Association of periOperative Nurses (2022). Guidelines for perioperative practice. AORN.