Concurrent Surgery
The MGH Experience with the
Boston Globe Spotlight Team

Society of Surgical Chairs
Public Trust, Transparency and the Media

Keith D. Lillemoe, M.D.
Chief of Surgery
Massachusetts General Hospital
Concurrent Surgery

The Perfect Storm

- A borderline acceptable practice
- Disgruntled faculty members
- A hungry investigative reporting team
- A less than desirable baseline relationship between the health system and the city’s leading newspaper
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MGH Timeline - #1

Pre-2011 - Followed CMS billing guidelines

2011-2013 - Concern raised; External review; New policy/education; ACS review

2013-2014 - Reported to State Board of Registration, Department of Public Health, JCAHO with no negative findings or actions
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MGH Timeline - #2

2014-2015 - Spotlight Team investigation begins


October 25, 2015 - Story Published
Clash in the name of care

It was a battle pitting a star surgeon against a great hospital.
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MGH Timeline - #2

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November 2015-present: Follow up stories, editorials
With double-booked surgeries, the patient has a right to know

By Joan Vennochi | GLOBE COLUMNIST OCTOBER 26, 2015

SOME PEOPLE can’t walk and chew gum at the same time.

Then, there are highly skilled surgeons who can perform complex and risky procedures on two patients, in two separate operating rooms, over the same scheduled time period.

It’s called concurrent surgery, and how it plays out at Massachusetts General Hospital was detailed in an extensive Globe Spotlight Team report. The Globe investigation, which focused on specific malpractice litigation, revealed that double-booked surgery is accepted practice at MGH. Surprisingly, there’s no obligation to tell the patient that it will be happening — even though some top medical professionals question the ethics of it all.
Patients owed full disclosure on concurrent surgeries

By The Editorial Board | OCTOBER 28, 2015
SPOTLIGHT UPDATE

MGH records sought in double-booking review

10 years of documents concerning practice of double-booking cases

Massachusetts General Hospital.

GLOBE STAFF PHOTO/PAT GREENHOUSE
In the aftermath of horror, resolve

MGH files sought in federal inquiry

10 years of documents concern practice of double-booking cases

By Jonathan Saltzman, Jenn Abelson, and Liz Kowalczyk

Federal prosecutors have subpoenaed 10 years of internal records from Massachusetts General Hospital and have interviewed several physicians as part of an investigation into surgeons running two operating rooms at the same time, according to individuals with direct knowledge of the probe.

Some MGH staff members have raised concerns for years about double-booked operations in the renowned hospital's orthopedics department, a dispute little known to the public until a Globe Spotlight update last month.

People reacted on Saturday morning, near the scene of one of Friday's terrorist shootings in Paris.

Members of the French military patrolled near the Eiffel Tower, one of several popular tourist sites closed Saturday.
SPOTLIGHT

Concurrent surgeries come under new scrutiny

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center has told surgeons that “plans for overlapping surgery should be disclosed to the patient prior to the surgery.”

By Jenn Abelson, Jonathan Saltzman and Liz Kowalczyk | GLOBE STAFF
DECEMBER 20, 2015
The Lunder Building at Massachusetts General Hospital, which opened in 2011, is where orthopedic surgeons operate.

By Jonathan Saltzman and Jenn Abelson | GLOBE STAFF  JANUARY 07, 2016
Our view of overlapping surgery

The main facade of Massachusetts General Hospital.

By Peter L. Slavin and Thomas J. Lynch | JANUARY 10, 2016
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Follow-up #1

• ACS Committee/Policy Statement
• Department of Justice Investigation
• US Senate Investigation
• New MGH Policy with increased Transparency and Documentation
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Follow-up #2

• Total cost to MGH: Millions of dollars……..and potentially much more to come
• No obvious effect on institutional or clinical volume, ? reputation
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Satisfaction

2016 – Pulitzer Prize For Investigative Reporting:
Tampa Bay Times
and
Sarasota Herald Tribune