

ACS 2026 Surgeons and Engineers: A Dialogue on Surgical Simulation

P-C-08

Research Abstracts

Peer Review of Consent Process in a District General Hospital in North Wales - A Quality Improvement Project

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Introduction: We have studied the consenting process in elective General Surgery patients, with two audit cycles conducted over a duration of four years. The standards against which this was conducted was based on the recommendations of the Royal College of Surgeons and our organisation policy based on the All Wales Model Policy. According to the standard, consenting for complex or life-changing procedures should take place over more than one session, whereby the patient is made aware of what the procedure entails and is thereby, given sufficient time to think about the impact it will have on their lives. This gives the opportunity for consent withdrawal by the patient, if so desired, closer to the procedure date. Our target had been set to 90% for evidence of two-stage consenting process, shared decision-making, disclosure of all relevant risks and benefits of procedure beforehand, providing alternative options of treatment and evidence of patient leaflets being handed out. As a result, it was aimed at the day of consenting being a day separate to the day of procedure.

Methods: Consent clinics were set up. A policy was put in place for concurrent recording of consent dialogues and offering of alternative treatments, when offered. In the cohorts studied, random sample selection was done using randomiser.org. A structured audit proforma was used to collect data.

Results: The practice in 2021 showed 33% evidence of two-stage consenting process, shared decision-making stood at 63%, consent dialogue documentation at 58% and alternative treatments offered in 47% of cases. In 2025, two-stage consenting process went up to 90.2%, consent dialogue was recorded in 95.12% cases, shared decision-making in 90.2% and discussion of risks and benefits in 90.2% cases.

Conclusions: Implementing said interventions has encouraged a patient-centered approach with increased patient satisfaction in the domain of consenting.