Utilizing Perioperative Services to Creatively Solve Hospital Capacity Constraints
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BACKGROUND
- In 2012, there were approximately 35,112 adult surgeries performed at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC).
- Approximately 400 potential surgeries turned away annually
- Local/regional referring physicians were frustrated by the difficulty of getting patients access to our tertiary care system

Solution
Increase bed capacity for patients coming from outside referrals.
1.) Improve access to surgical specialties
2.) Create a surgical transition unit (STU)

STU
6 pre-operative beds converted into inpatient beds

OBJECTIVE
- Increase annual surgical volume
- Optimize the use of perioperative space

IMPLEMENTATION
STU opened in March 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STEP 1</td>
<td>6 pre-operative beds, in close proximity, were identified to create the STU</td>
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<td>STEP 2</td>
<td>Collaborative implementation team formed</td>
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<td>STEP 3</td>
<td>Open Surgical Transition Unit</td>
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<td>STEP 4</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
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EVALUATION
Successes
- Increase in referring surgical volume within the first 6 months
- Within first 6 months, 25% of referrals become surgical cases
- Reduced capacity restraints within the emergency department and inpatient areas
- Doubled size of STU after first 6 months

Challenges
- Decreased number of pre-operative beds
- Inpatient area within a procedural area
- Two separate documentation systems
- Providing family-centered care

BENEFITS of STU
- STU improved flexibility by working through a rapid cycle improvement process
- Creation of STU expanded role of advanced practice nurses in perioperative services