Understanding Operating Room (OR) Utilization at the VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

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INTRODUCTION

CURRENT STATE FINDINGS

• We found the VA used the following formula when calculating utilization. Using this formula we found that utilization was equal to \(82.9\% \pm 10.3\%\) SD in August (\(84.9\% \pm 10.5\%\) SD as of December):

\[
\text{Utilization} = \frac{\text{surgery time} + \text{turnover time}}{\text{allocated daily block time}}
\]

• Through observations, the team found variability in scheduling procedures across the various services

• The institution lacked a standardized process for releasing allocated block time; each service released time based on their unique scheduling processes

• Earlier release times were correlated to higher likelihood of the block time being picked up by another service

OPTIMIZING SCHEDULING PRACTICES: METHODS

The team was tasked with identifying the services which could benefit most greatly from additional block time, as the VA was considering adding one more OR per day.

The team approached this by:

• Fitting distributions for most common procedure types

• Meeting with each specialty’s scheduler to identify and group similar cases

• Evaluating scheduling accuracy for each service

• Creating a tool to find monthly block hours by service in a given range of dates

• Identifying common procedure types with high inaccuracy

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