

# Ontario Surgical Quality Improvement Network Update

Issue 26, Season Winter 2023

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## Community of Practice Highlights

### Contributor Shout-Out

The ON-SQIN Program Delivery Team would like to recognize **Celia Dann**, Surgical Clinical Reviewer (SCR), London Health Sciences Centre. Celia has been instrumental in the development of the Cut the Carbon: Reducing Surgical Waste campaign. She has also been a major contributor to Quorum and the monthly SCR Open Forum meeting, where she articulately shares her insights and experience. We are so grateful for your contributions to the network, Celia!

### Surgical Site Infection Quality Standard

The [Surgical Site Infections Quality Standard](#) addresses care for people of all ages who have a surgical procedure that requires an incision (a cut through the skin). The quality standard will be released in March 2023, and identifies what can be done to prevent a surgical site infection and outlines the best methods for communication among patients, family members, caregivers. If there are opportunities to work together to implement the standard, please contact [julie.skelding@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:julie.skelding@ontariohealth.ca).

### Sickle Cell Disease Quality Standard

Ontario Health has developed a new quality standard that outlines what high-quality care looks like for people with sickle cell disease. The standard can be used to help:

- Patients, families, and caregivers know what to ask for in their care

- Health care professionals know what care they should be offering
- Health care organizations improve the quality of care they provide

Please [download](#) and share this quality standard with your networks. For more information, please contact [QualityStandards@OntarioHealth.ca](mailto:QualityStandards@OntarioHealth.ca).

### Cut the Carbon: Reducing Surgical Waste Campaign

While ON-SQIN teams continue to prioritize perioperative efficiency and better patient outcomes, another important issue has come to focus. This year, the ON-SQIN collaborative campaign will focus our efforts on looking at the perioperative journey with a “green” lens.

**Dr. David Smith**, surgeon at the North York General Hospital, and our partners at [Creating a Sustainable Canadian Health System in a Climate Crisis \(CASCADES\)](#), have helped us develop environmentally focused change ideas that include resources for discussion and implementation that can be incorporated into upcoming surgical quality improvement plans. For more information, see upcoming meetings at the end of this update.

*“We take care of the kids. [...] So we want to leave this planet in good shape for the patients that we are treating today.”*

*—Dr Annie Fecteau, The Hospital for Sick Children*



## Feature: Enhancing Recovery After Surgery Success at Halton Healthcare



Halton Healthcare – Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital surgical quality improvement team (left to right): Neeta Bahia, Kelly Hewer, Jaclyn Ricci, Ashley Dendekker, Cathy Goacher, Dr. Norah-Faye Matthies, Carmen Caloian

The surgery team at Halton Healthcare – Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital have continued to focus on reducing opioid prescriptions, urinary tract infections (UTIs), and surgical site infections (SSIs) as part of their *Committed to Better: Enhancing Recovery after Surgery* efforts.

### Opioids

Starting with same day discharge total hip arthroplasty (THA), patients and families were provided with pain management education through a “Opioids for Pain After Surgery” pamphlet from the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) Canada to support opioid safety and awareness. The team saw a reported 50% reduction in the use of prescribed opioids (without an increase in required refills within 30 days) compared to the inpatient THA discharge prescriptions. Next steps include spreading standardized pain medication discharge prescribing protocols to other day surgery procedures.

### UTIs and SSIs

ERAS protocols focused on bowel surgeries have significantly reduced post-operative complications. Compared with the previous year, there was a 44% reduction in urinary tract infections (UTIs) and a 26% reduction in surgical site infections (SSI). The team attributes their success to reviewing all incidences of UTIs and SSIs at monthly meetings with a view to reassess change ideas. Some of the more effective strategies included the following:

### Change Ideas to Reduce UTI:

- Minimizing routine catheter placement
- Using aseptic catheter placement when needed
- Ensuring appropriate maintenance of catheters when in place
- Removing catheters as early as possible with appropriate protocols

### Change Ideas to Reduce SSI:

- Using clippers for appropriate hair removal outside the operating room
- Using appropriate skin antiseptics

## Feature: Greening the Operating Room at Trillium Health Partners



Dr Anita Rao, Anesthesiologist, Trillium Health Partners

The perioperative team at Trillium Health Partners (THP) has made environmental sustainability a priority over the past 2 years.

### Reducing Anesthetic Gas Use

Early in 2022, their anesthesia department eliminated the use of the anesthetic gas, desflurane, reducing the carbon emissions from anesthetic gases by 16-fold. In addition, anesthesia delivery units were programmed to run minimal fresh gas flows at 0.5 L/min, down from 1 L/min on auto-control, significantly reducing anesthetic gas use. With both these simple initiatives, carbon emissions are projected to decrease by over 500 tonnes per year from anesthesia delivery alone!

### Recycling

[PVC 123](#) is a medical PVC (polyvinyl chloride, a synthetic plastic) recycling program started in 2019. Participating hospitals can recycle items such as oxygen masks and tubing. Since implementing the PVC 123 program in 2021, 2.6 tonnes of highly recyclable PVC have been diverted from landfill.

THP is also part of [Stryker's Sustainability Program](#), which allows participating hospitals to recycle medical equipment from the operating room (e.g., surgical

instruments, saturation probes, sequential compression devices). Stryker's program has helped TPH divert 304 kg of valuable materials from the landfill.

### Tips

**Dr. Anita Rao**, anesthesiologist at THP and lead for these green initiatives, recommends the following tips for other surgical departments interested in creating green changes in surgery:

- Present the environmental and financial case for implementing greening initiatives to your hospital administration

- Solicit ideas from all members of the perioperative team
- Identify green champions
- Celebrate successes to generate enthusiasm and boost morale

For 2023, environmental aspirations include improving energy efficiency by employing HVAC operating room setbacks (air exchanges are decreased during unoccupied periods), expanding recycling in their surgical suites, and exploring the use of reusable equipment such as laryngeal mask airway and surgical gowns.

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## Upcoming Events

- **Surgical Clinical Reviewer meetings:** March 16, and April 20, 2023, at 12 p.m.
- **Surgeon Champion meetings:** February 28, 2023, at 7 a.m. and March 28, 2023, at 7 a.m.
- **Ontario Surgical Quality Spring Meeting:** June 2, 2023, at 8 a.m.
- **Cut the Carbon Working Group:** February 17, 2023, at 12pm
- **Cut the Carbon: Reducing Surgical Waste Campaign Kick-off:** March 3, 2023, at 12 p.m.

Please email us at [ONSQIN@OntarioHealth.ca](mailto:ONSQIN@OntarioHealth.ca) to share your hospital's work in the next update.

To learn more about ON-SQIN and how you can get involved, please [visit our website](#) or contact [ONSQIN@OntarioHealth.ca](mailto:ONSQIN@OntarioHealth.ca). Past issues of these updates can be found [here](#).