

Optimizing Surgeon Preference Cards for ROI, Efficiency, and Exceptional Patient Care

Surgeon preference cards might seem straightforward in operating room (OR) logistics, but their impact on hospital operations is profound.

These cards detail the instruments, supplies, and preparation steps needed for each procedure, serving as a guide to ensure surgeries run smoothly. However, outdated or inaccurate preference cards can lead to wasted resources, inefficiencies, and compromised patient care.

With surgical services being the primary revenue generator and cost center for most hospitals, optimizing surgeon preference cards becomes a game-changer.¹ From reducing waste to improving operating room efficiency and patient outcomes, the benefits are undeniable.

Facilities that prioritize preference card optimization can see:



ROI within 60 to 90 days and savings upwards of \$1,000,000 annually

If you're ready to unlock these gains and address the common inefficiencies in your OR, read on. Below, we'll pinpoint the challenges hospitals face with surgeon preference cards and outline **a proven eight-step plan** to solve them.

The Hidden Cost of Outdated Surgeon Preference Cards

When surgeon preference cards are inaccurate, they create a ripple effect of inefficiency throughout the surgical process. From wasted inventory to scheduling conflicts and communication breakdowns, the issues pile up quickly.

Here are five common problems hospitals encounter with their preference cards:

¹Abdulsalam, Y., & Schneller, E. (2019). Hospital supply expenses: An important ingredient in health services research. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 76(2), 240-252.

5 Common Problems With Preference Cards

- 1. Overwhelming Number of Cards:**
Many hospitals juggle thousands of preference cards, making updates a daunting and time-consuming process.
- 2. Low Collaboration Between Teams:**
Miscommunication between OR staff, supply chain teams, and sterile processing departments (SPD) leads to missing data and inconsistent processes.
- 3. Variable Formats and Content:**
Discrepancies in how cards are structured across specialties cause confusion from picking supplies to room setup.
- 4. Lack of Continuous Improvement:**
Without regular audits or a formal update process, preference cards quickly become outdated and unreliable.²
- 5. Outdated Systems:**
Many electronic health record (EHR) systems aren't designed to effectively manage surgeon preference cards, leaving teams reliant on inefficient manual processes.

These challenges don't just hamper day-to-day operations; they drive up costs and reduce staff and patient satisfaction.

The ROI of Optimizing Surgeon Preference Cards

Addressing these challenges is no small effort, but the financial and operational payoffs are immense. Hospitals that take a structured approach to surgeon preference card optimization often achieve significant results, including:



Savings of **\$1 million or more** in the **first year** by reducing supply waste, improving inventory management, and increasing operative efficiency.



Better staff satisfaction by providing surgical teams with reliable tools that reduce frustration and miscommunication.



Enhanced patient safety by eliminating procedural inconsistencies and cutting unnecessary delays.

The question isn't whether optimizing your preference cards is worth it. The real question is whether your hospital can afford not to take action.

²Hospital cuts costs through continuous improvements. (2010, July 10). Fierce Healthcare.

A Step-by-Step Guide to Surgeon Preference Card Optimization

Whether you're managing a small community hospital or a large healthcare system, the following eight steps can guide you toward a successful preference card improvement initiative:

1

Establish Clear, Measurable Goals

Define what you hope to achieve from this initiative. Goals could include reducing supply chain waste, improving staff efficiency, or lowering surgery setup times. Use baseline data from your surgical supply usage and operative performance to set specific, quantifiable targets.

2

Build a Cross-Functional Team

Engage team members from across the organization, including OR staff, sterile processing, and supply chain managers. Include frontline team representatives like nurses and surgical technicians to ensure all perspectives are considered.

3

Standardize Card Formats and Content

Agree on a standardized format for all preference cards, regardless of surgical specialty. Define what information each card should include and standardize naming conventions.³

4

Leverage Data to Identify Gaps

Review existing data from SPD and supply chain systems to identify inefficiencies. Metrics such as unused instruments, returned supplies, and missing items can help you pinpoint areas for improvement.

5

Prioritize High-Value Cards

Focus first on preference cards for high-volume or high-cost surgeries. Procedures involving costly implants or customized trays are excellent starting points, as improvements here will yield immediate savings.

6

Train and Communicate

Explain the "why" behind this effort to everyone involved. Provide practical training for new processes and tools. Celebrate early wins to build momentum and maintain buy-in from the team.

7

Implement a Continuous Improvement Process

Set up a clear system for ongoing preference card updates. Schedule regular audits and establish a feedback loop so that staff can report inaccurate or outdated cards.⁴

8

Adopt Technology Solutions Like PREFcards

Modern tools, such as PREFcards, simplify preference card management with smart software solutions. PREFcards not only provide intuitive management tools but also offer robust reporting and analytics to help hospitals stay ahead of inefficiencies.⁵

³Hegwer, L. R. (2018, December 12). Mercy saves millions in the OR through standardization and automation. HFMA.

⁴Hospital cuts costs through continuous improvements. (2010, July 10). Fierce Healthcare.

⁵Case study: Transforming a legacy asc system into a modern tech with ehr implementation - capminds. (2022, October 31).

These steps form the foundation for transforming your OR operations and achieving long-term success in preference card management.

How PREFcards Can Help

PREFcards is uniquely designed to address the toughest challenges hospitals face when managing surgeon preference cards.

Whether you're dealing with outdated EHR systems, team collaboration hurdles, or inefficiencies in surgical supply chain management, PREFcards delivers proven solutions.

Why Choose PREFcards?



Smart Automation

PREFcards streamlines updates and eliminates manual errors.



Data-Driven Insights

Gain real-time analytics on supply usage, costs, and inefficiencies.



Seamless Integration

PREFcards integrates smoothly with existing systems, reducing disruption.



Ease of Use

Designed with frontline staff in mind, PREFcards makes managing preference cards simple and effective.

Time to Transform Your Operating Room

Outdated surgeon preference cards are costing your hospital more than just money. They impact staff efficiency, patient care, and the overall success of your surgical services. But with a clear plan and the right tools, you can turn these challenges into opportunities for growth and improvement.

Take the first step toward operating room excellence.

Contact us today to learn how our smart solutions can transform your hospital's OR efficiency and financial health.



email us at info@prefcards.com



visit our website at www.prefcards.com

Don't wait for inefficiencies to escalate. Your path to better ROI, smoother operations, and improved patient care starts now.