

COVID DRIVE THRU - THE FAST LANE TO THE OR

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Background

The CDC and hospital requirement to swab patients <72 prior to surgery put an enormous strain on our lab facilities. Turnaround times increased significantly from 12-24 hours to at times greater than 96 hours. This situation brought forth an opportunity to create a new workflow that would allow us to get patients to the OR quickly and safely while still adhering to the guidelines set forth by the CDC.

Problem

How do we maintain optimal perioperative throughput for a level II trauma center with an add-on rate of greater than 30% and preoperative COVID testing turnaround times (TAT) averaging 24-48 hours?

Conclusion

This improved workflow has allowed us to:

- Maintain patient safety and satisfaction by limiting exposure within the hospital, ensuring ease in the testing process, and providing timely results.
- Increased surgeon satisfaction and improved our ability to serve patients by opening the door for add-on urgent/elective cases.
- Enabled us to help our sister facilities if needed by testing patients when timely results were not available.
- Given us a solid foundation to continue as cases have flexed with both the delta and omicron surges.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the Pre-Admit Clinic, Inpatient Laboratory, Surgery Schedulers, Security Team and of course our Patients.

Results

595 patients tested during first year of implementation

Test result turnaround time decreased from greater than 48 hours to less than 4 hours

Effective workflow implementation improving surgical throughput during COVID-19

Alleviated need for STAT orders



Increased efficiency and prevention of case cancellations

Method

Surgery Scheduler notifies Pre-Admit Team of required testing

Patient given direct line to cell phone carried by "COVID RN of the Day"

Patient calls "COVID RN of the Day" 10 minutes prior to arrival

Patient instructed by RN on exact location of testing appointment and process of parking and remaining in vehicle

RN meets patient in vehicle outside

RN collects COVID swab and gives preop instructions

RN delivers lab specimen directly to in-house lab