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Analysis of Surgeon Utilization of the Preoperative Assessment Communication Education (PACE) Center in the Pediatric Population

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Objective: To evaluate surgeon attitudes and utilization of preoperative services in the pediatric population.

Aim: To improve the pediatric perisurgical services offered by our institution.

Background: Perioperative assessment is vital to overall surgical patient outcomes.¹ In addition to risk stratification, it provides additional opportunities for patients and their families to receive education on the surgical process.² Pediatric patients are at greater risk than adults for anesthesia-related complications and benefit from specialized presurgical care. Currently, our institution does not provide specialized care in its presurgical facility.

Methods: Surgical and preoperative center appointment lists will be cross-referenced to determine the percentage of pediatric patients evaluated prior to surgery. An online provider survey will be used to gauge physician attitudes toward presurgical evaluation.

Results: We found that 16% of outpatient surgical pediatric patients received preoperative assessment at our center. Despite underutilization, 42% of survey respondents believed healthy patients benefit from presurgical services and 88% believed patients with comorbidities benefit. Additionally, 79% agreed that pediatric patients would benefit from specialized care.

Conclusion: Although our facility is underutilized among the pediatric population, the physicians surveyed viewed our services as valuable. Our facility must take steps to further understand why surgeons who did not respond to the survey do not utilize our services. Subsequently, we can address these issues and educate surgeons on the benefits of pediatric preoperative assessment and the services our center provides. In doing so, we must also improve our services to meet the pediatric preoperative care standards set forth by the current literature.

1. King MS. Preoperative evaluation. *Am Fam Physician* 2000; 62:387–396.

2. Niederhuber JE, Dunwoody SL. *Fundamentals of Surgery*. Stamford, CT: Appleton & Lange; 1998.