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Purpose and Scope

This policy describes the College's position on "Correct Patient – Correct Procedure Policy" by Fellows/Registrars of the Australasian College of Podiatric Surgeons ("the College").

Background

The College recognises the importance of patient safety and expects hospitals and practitioners to adopt protocols utilising multiple, complementary strategies. It is a basic requirement of any surgical intervention to ensure the correct patient, correct procedure, correct side, correct instrumentation and associated equipment required along with the correct personnel and environment for such a procedure. The practice of recognised protocols to facilitate this process should be adopted.

Body of Policy

To the extent possible, the patient or their designated representative should be involved in the process. Adopting a "team approach" in the theatre will reduce risk but the operating surgeon is ultimately responsible. Every member of the operating theatre team has a duty to be aware that the correct patient, side and site are operated on. If any member of the team believes the incorrect patient, side or site is being prepared for surgery, they should immediately voice their concerns. There should be no criticism of persons raising concerns even if their concerns prove to be unfounded.

Consent and Documentation

Verification of the patient must be made with the patient or the patient's designated representative (if the patient is legally a child or unable to answer for him or herself). Patient consent must be obtained. The consent form must include and the patient or representative must verify:-

- patient's full name;
- name of procedure;
- site of procedure; and
- side of procedure.



The College recommends that the site and side of the operation be recorded in full (i.e. RIGHT or LEFT) and not abbreviated to R or L, whenever the side is recorded. All documentation must include the side and site. This includes patient notes, hospital forms and operating theatre lists.

Marking the Site of the Procedure

- The Podiatric surgeon should be satisfied on which side and site the procedure is to be performed. This should occur in consultation with the patient and noted on consent forms.
- An indelible pen is used to unambiguously mark the side/site of the procedure. This is done or checked by the Podiatric surgeon in consultation with the patient (where possible) and medical record. The patient (who should not have been sedated) is informed that the pen mark indicates the site or side of the operation. Multiple operation sites may be individually marked.
- The pen mark is checked by the nurse as the patient leaves the ward or holding area for the operating theatre.
- The pen mark is checked by the scout nurse prior to the patient entering the operating theatre. This mark must then be verified by theatre staff.
- The surgeon visibly checks the pen mark prior to commencing surgery and ensures this is in accord with his or her intended operation before induction of anaesthesia.

Implants / internal fixation / prosthetic appliances

The Podiatric surgeon and the operating room nurse must check the presence of the appropriate implants prior to the procedure.

Imaging

The Podiatric surgeon and his/her team must confer that the appropriate images are available, and confirm the site and side of the proposed surgery.

Final Verification

The Podiatric surgeon, anaesthetist and nursing team must confer and concur to ensure the correct patient, procedure, site and side. Marking of the operative site must be confirmed. A "time out" or "final check" should be part of this procedure. This should preferably occur before induction of anaesthesia.



At all stages of this process, there should be consistency of documentation of side/site. If any inconsistency arises, progress towards operation should be suspended, the incorrect documentation should be changed and signed, and an explanation of the inconsistency recorded in the patient's medical history and signed by the Podiatric surgeon. The Podiatric surgeon should be satisfied of the appropriate side/site of surgery as recorded in the patient's medical notes before proceeding with surgery. If the Podiatric surgeon remains uncertain of the side/site of surgery or the side/site differs from that previously discussed with the patient, the procedure should be verified with the patient if not sedated or postponed or cancelled.

Relevant Documents

Royal Australasian College Of Surgeons Implementation Guidelines For Ensuring Correct Patient, Correct Side And Correct Side Surgery
Correct Patient, Side And Site Royal Australasian College Of Surgeons
Division: Subject: Fellowship And Standards Royal Australasian College Of Surgeons Implementation Guidelines For Ensuring Correct Patient, Correct Side And Correct Side Surgery
Correct Patient, Side And Site Ref. No.: Approval Date: Review Date:
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