



Reducing same day pediatric surgical cancellations improves cost-effective utilization of operating rooms and satisfaction of surgeons and families



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BACKGROUND

- Same day cancellations of scheduled surgical cases result in the loss of OR time, dissatisfaction among families and surgeons
- Several months of long wait time
- Expensive and waste of valuable OR personnel time
- We aimed to reduce same day surgery cancellations and its associated negative impacts

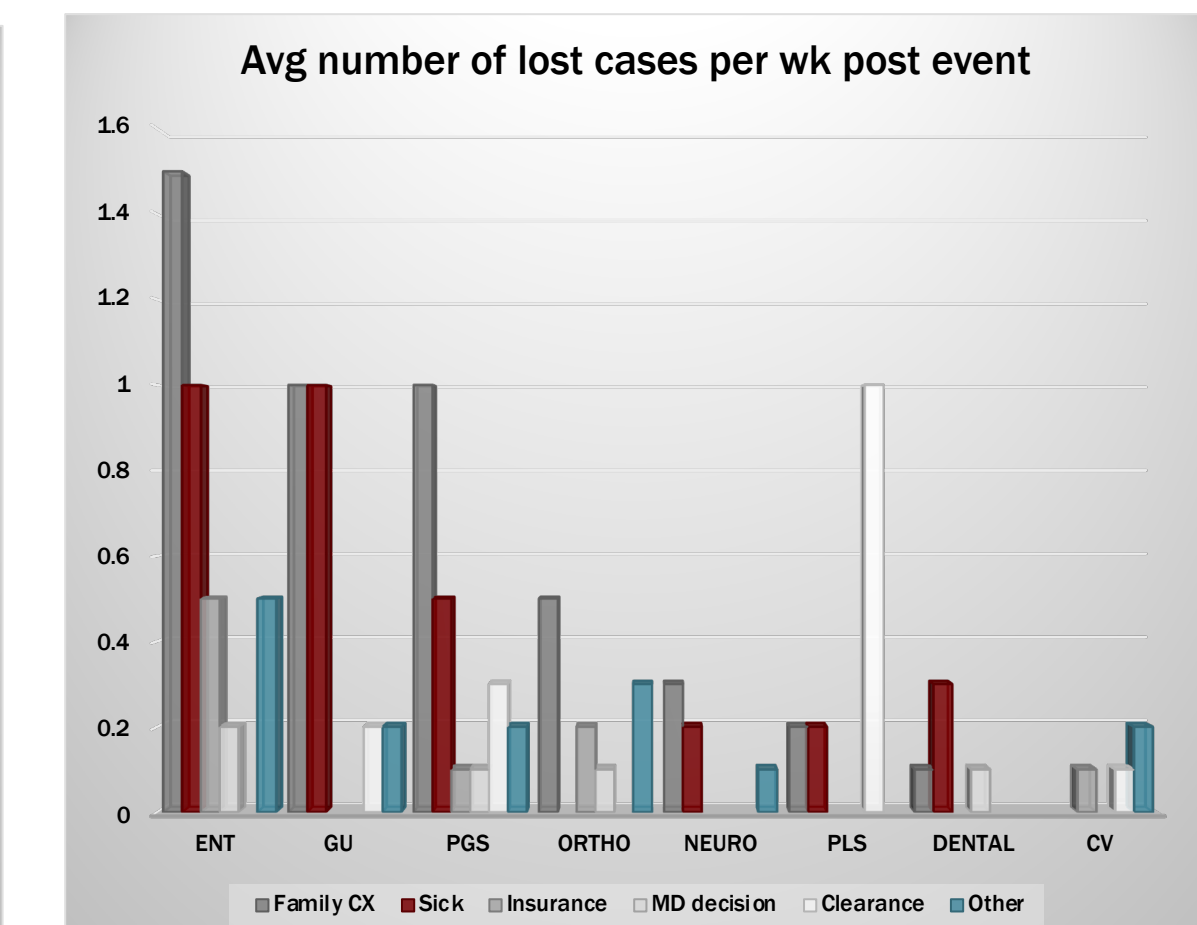
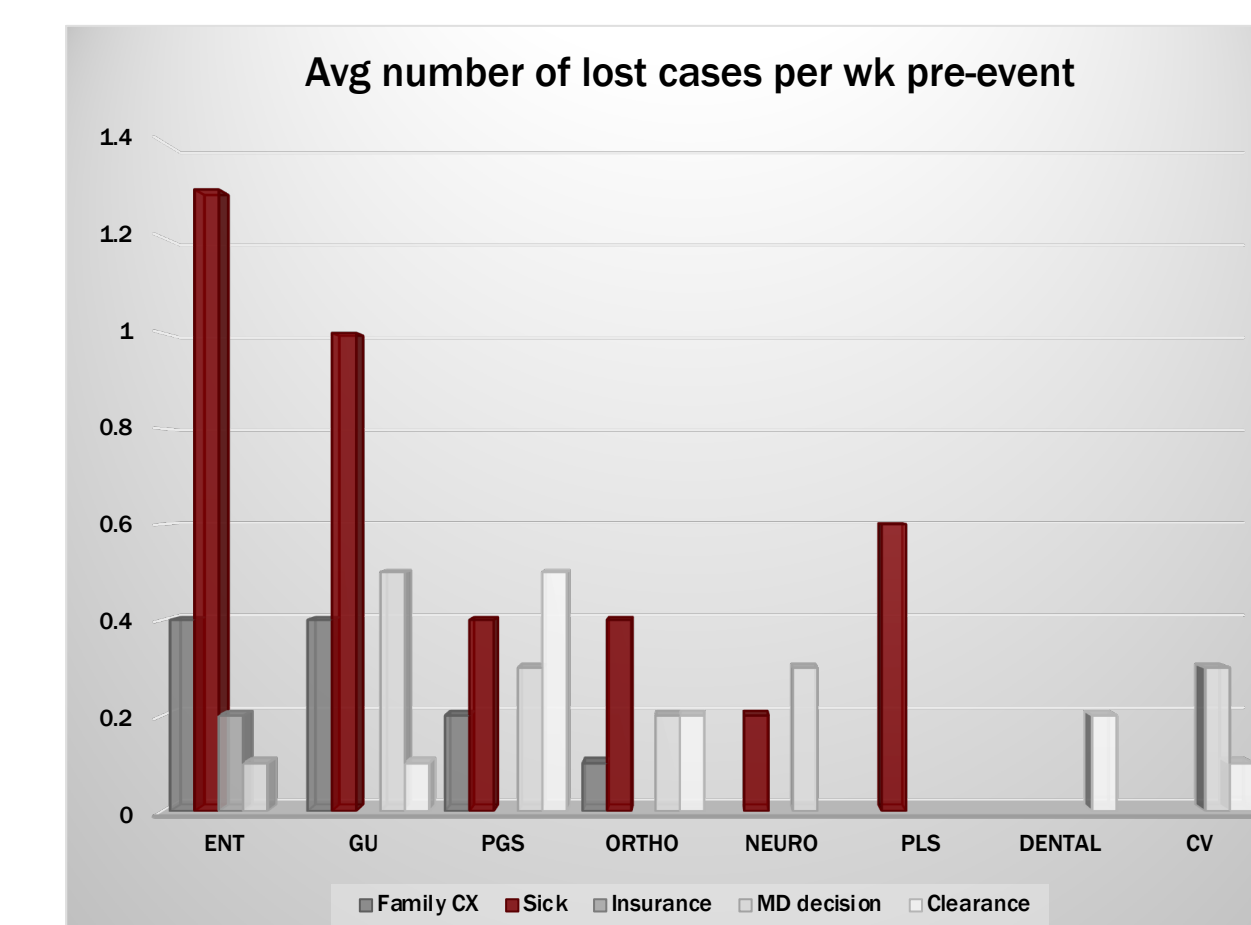
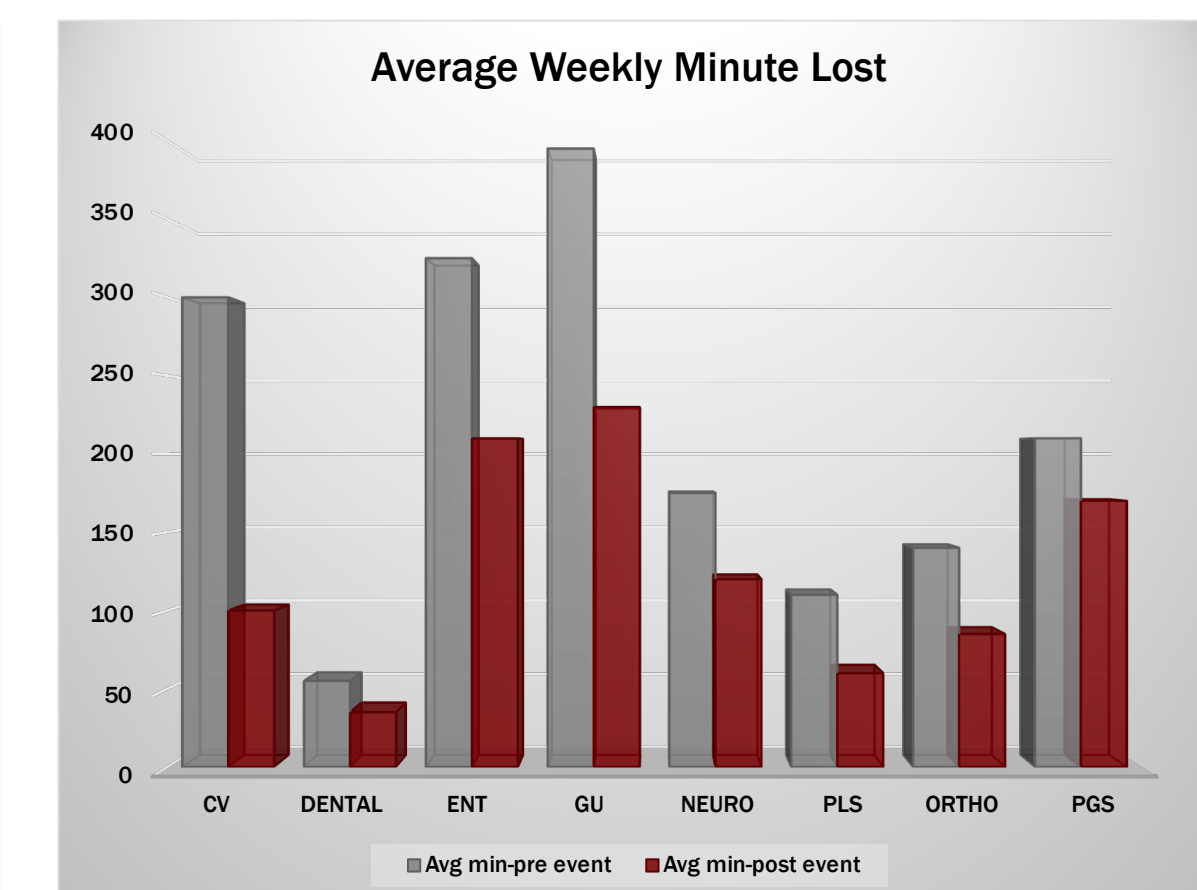
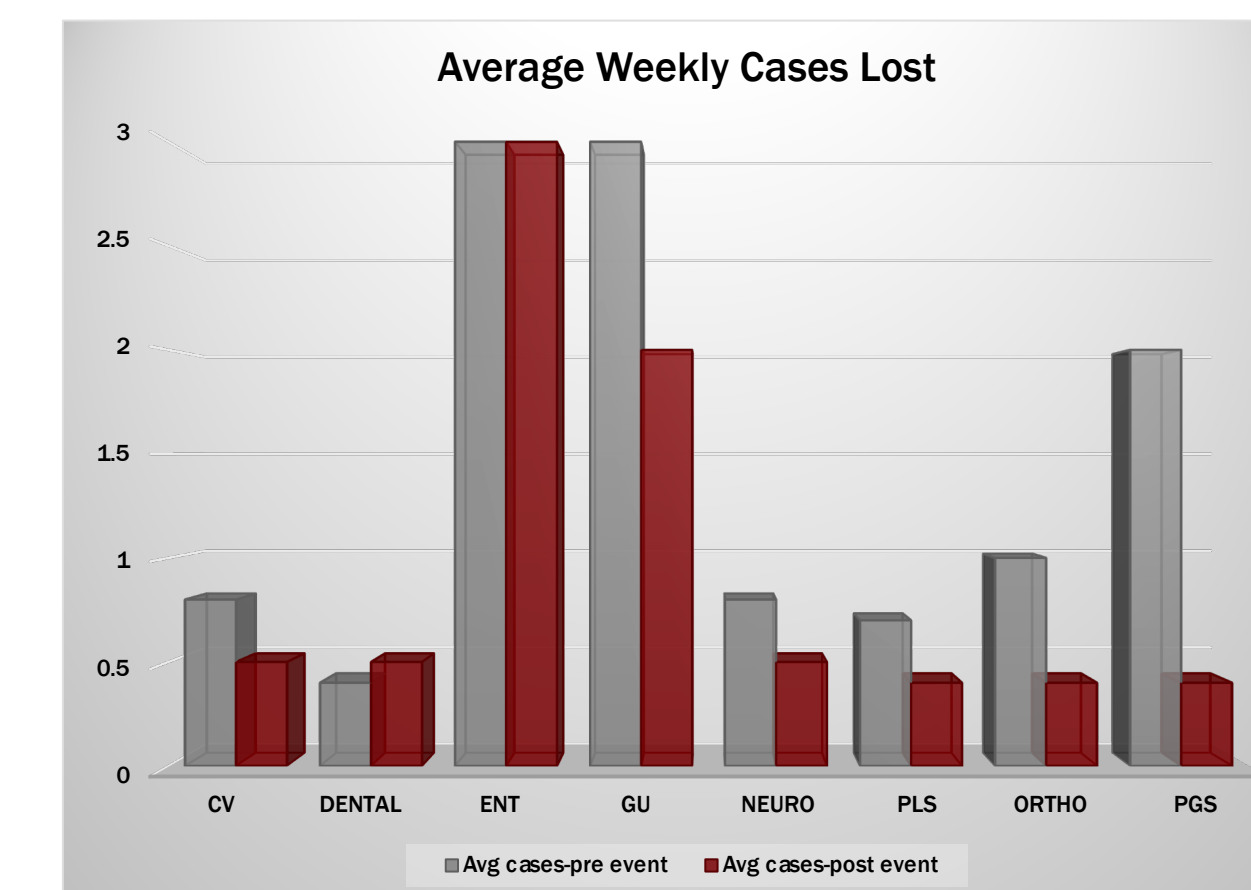
METHODS

- Quality improvement project to minimize same day cancellations
- Data obtained and classified by surgical specialty over 2 months
- Average number of cases and minutes lost for each week were calculated.
- Causes of the cancellations were classified as: 1) family 2) provider 3) Sickness 4) insurance and 5) Clearance related reasons
- A three-step process was designed to rectify cancellations due to recent or active illness on the scheduled day
- 2 weeks prior to scheduled dates of surgery: family was called to identify significant issues

- 4-7 days prior: EMR was reviewed and families were contacted for identifying markers of recent illness and clearances (If positive, cancelled and replaced with other patient)
- 48 hours prior: Patients missed during the previous 2 encounters were contacted
- The metrics measured at baseline were repeated after the project implementation.

RESULTS

- Majority of the same day cancellations were due to active/recent illness such as upper/lower respiratory infection, ongoing fever, asthma flare etc.
- Data were collected for three months after implementing the project
- During this time, 359 patients were contacted of whom 52 patients were flagged 'sick' well in advance. 44 patients were cancelled in advance (making the OR slot available for another patient) and 8 of were cancelled on the same day
- Total number of minutes lost for all services decreased from 1815 to 1010 (44.4%) per week
- Sick cancellations decreased by 25%.



CONCLUSION

- Early identification of sick patients aiming to prevent same day cancellations saved 2-3 hours of OR time per day and 2 million USD per year
- Overall cancellations were reduced by focusing on one significant reason (current or recent illness)
- Additional incremental changes are being implemented to reduce the remaining preventable cancellations.