

WHO Surgical Safety Checklist in a Rural Ugandan Hospital, Barriers and Drivers to Implementation

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Abstract : There is strong evidence to support the efficacy of the World Health Organization (WHO) Surgical Safety Checklist in improving patient safety; however, its use can be associated with difficulties. This study uses qualitative data collected in Kitovu Healthcare Complex, a rural Ugandan hospital, to identify factors that may influence the use of the checklist in a low-income setting. Potential barriers to and motivators for the hospital's use of this checklist are identified and explored through observations of current patient safety practices; semi-structured interviews with theatre staff; a focus group with doctors; and trial implementation of the checklist. Barriers identified include the institutional context; knowledge and understanding; patient safety culture; resources and checklist contents. Motivators for correct use include prior knowledge; team attitudes; and a hospital advocate. Challenges are complex and unique to this socioeconomic context. Stepwise change to improve patient safety practices, local champions, whole team training, and checklist modification may assist the implementation and sustainable use of the checklist in an effective way.

Keywords : anaesthesia, patient safety, Uganda, WHO surgical safety checklist

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