Procedure Title:	Central Zone Perioperative Services – OR Block Release Policy		
Applied To:	Department of Surgery, Department of Perioperative Services		
Location Applicability:	Central Zone		
Governing Policy:	n/a		
Approved:	**Effective:**	**Next Review:**	
June 3, 2024	June 6, 2024	August 2, 2024	
Sponsor:	Director, Perioperative Services Network		
Approval Authority:	Director, Perioperative Services Network		
Number: n/a		**Manual:** Perioperative Services	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines that:

- **Surgeons must release scheduled OR time *a minimum of 14 calendar days* in advance of the scheduled OR block at the Victoria General Hospital (VG) and Halifax Infirmary (HI) and *a minimum of 28 calendar days*, in advance of the scheduled OR block at Dartmouth General Hospital (DGH) and Hants Community Hospital (Hants), except for extenuating circumstances.**
- OR Release data will be considered in determining future block allocation to services and surgeon scheduling.
- When a block becomes available, the OR Manager will offer the time to other surgeons. Priority will be given to surgeons based on historical usage, need, and those who have patients booked into Novari in advance. Wait time targets may also be taken into consideration when reassigning OR time.

PURPOSE

Short notice OR 'give backs' or releases, result in unfilled OR blocks leading to poor utilization. The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to outline a consistent, effective, and systematic process for releasing OR blocks, with the goal of maximizing OR utilization.

MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT/PREREQUISITES

- Central Zone OR Block Release Tracker

PROCEDURE

This procedure ensures that surgeons release their scheduled OR block time a minimum of 14 days before the scheduled date of surgery at the VG and HI and a minimum of 28 days for DGH and Hants. This enables OR managers to re-assign the block to other surgeons in a timely manner, enabling other providers to utilize available surgical time.

Seq. No.	Task Description	Role
1.	If an assigned surgeon is not able to use their allocated OR block, the surgeon must reach out to the Division Head (with the exception of Urology, who must reach out the Department Head) as soon as possible to offer the OR time to another surgeon within the same service. If another surgeon within the service accepts the allocated block time, the releasing surgeon must notify the OR Manager of the change, via email. The OR manager will collect and record the following information in the Central Zone OR Release tracker (Appendix A): - Surgeon Name - Service - Scheduled OR Block Date - OR Block Release Date - # of Days Ahead of Scheduled OR Block - Reason for Release (“surgeon unavailable” is not sufficient) - Replacement Surgeon - Replacement Service	Surgeon, Division/ Department Head
2.	If another surgeon within the service cannot use their allocated block time, **the surgeon must contact the OR manager via email to release the block a minimum of 14 days (VG & HI)/28 days (DGH & Hants) (except for extenuating circumstances as outlined in Appendix B) in advance of the scheduled OR block.** The OR manager will collect and record the following information: - Releasing Surgeon Name - Releasing Service - Scheduled OR Block Date - OR Block Release Date	Surgeon, OR Manager

	- # of Days Ahead of Scheduled OR Block - Reason for Release **("surgeon unavailable" is not sufficient**)	
3.	When a block becomes available, the OR Manager will offer the time for another service to use. **Priority will be given to surgeons based on historical usage, need, and those who have patients booked into Novari in advance via 'Christmas Day Booking.'** Wait time targets may also be taken into consideration when reassigning OR time. The OR manager will collect and record the following information: - Replacement Surgeon - Replacement Service **If a replacement surgeon is not found, the OR manager will indicate "Not Replaced" for the above categories.**	OR Manager
4.	When an OR Block has been released, the Surgeon who has released the OR block may not reclaim the block or pick up available OR time at another site on the same day.	Surgeon
5.	The OR Manager of each site will share the OR Release data with the Perioperative Director monthly.	OR Manager, Perioperative Director
6.	Every month, the Perioperative Director will collate the OR Release Data and share it with the Surgical Department and Division Heads, to foster performance discussions with surgeons.	Perioperative Director, the Surgical Department and Division Heads

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Appendices

Appendix A: Central Zone OR Release Tracker

Site	Releasing Surgeon	Releasing Service	Date of OR Block	Date OR Block Released	Days Ahead of Scheduled OR Block	Reason for Release	Replacement Surgeon	Replacement Service
[Name of Site]	[Name of Surgeon]	[Name of Service]	[Date]	[Date]	[##]	[e.g., planned vacation, unfilled list, etc.]	[Name of Surgeon / Not Replaced]	[Name of Service / Not Replaced]

Appendix B: Extenuating Circumstances

In extenuating circumstances, a surgeon may provide less than 14 days (VG & HI)/28 days (DGH & Hants) notice of an OR release without penalty. The allowable extenuating circumstances are:

- Surgeon is ill or under quarantine.
- Personal emergency, such as a family crisis or bereavement.

VERSION HISTORY

Version:	**Effective:**	**Approved by:**	**What's Changed:**
Original	June 6, 2024	Director, Perioperative Services Network	N/A