

## **Coordinated approach to implementation of preoperative testing clinical practice guidelines in Ontario hospitals**

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Data suggest substantial inappropriate or over-utilisation of routine preoperative testing for low and intermediate risk surgery in Ontario, specifically electrocardiograms and chest radiographies. The Guidelines Advisory Committee (GAC), a joint initiative of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and the Ontario Medical Association, undertook a guideline-based initiative to promote utilisation of these tests consistent with best available evidence.

The objective was to implement evidence-based recommendations and reduce inappropriate use of preoperative testing.

Strategy consisted of multi-pronged interventions, including a Hospital Feedback Study, development of relevant clinical policies and practice tools (such as a preoperative testing grid), training of local Opinion Leaders, and Continuing Medical Education. It relied on GAC's unique partnerships through the Ontario Guideline Collaborative, representing the licensing authority for the province, the five medical schools' continuing education divisions, the provincial hospital association and others. Through the Feedback Study, hospitals received individual preoperative testing utilisation profiles, guideline summaries, practice tools, and two follow-up reminders.

Preliminary evaluation through a hospital survey conducted with Chiefs of Staff or designates indicates that the multi-faceted implementation strategy employed has influenced change in hospital policy for, and utilisation of, routine preoperative testing.

Three essential factors contributed to the success of this first large-scale implementation project of its kind in Ontario: strong collaboration with members of the Ontario Guideline Collaborative and project partners; integration of interventions in a multi-level, multi-prong fashion; adaptability and ability to employ alternate strategies to increase the impact of planned activities.