

# Reducing Same-Day Cancellations of Colonoscopy Patients

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## PURPOSE

We noticed that nearly one out of every ten colonoscopy cases scheduled were regularly canceled on the same day as the scheduled procedure.

Colonoscopies that are cancelled on the same day as the procedure cause disruptive gaps in the operating room schedule. The nature of the colonoscopy prep, which requires 24-48 hours of preparation, makes it impossible to fill these appointments at the last minute.

Cancelled colonoscopy cases represent lost revenue of approximately \$900 per case.

The purpose of the study was to reduce the number of same-day cancellations of colonoscopy patients at Orchard Surgical Center.

## GOAL

Nationally, the average cancellation rate is 5-8% (ASGE GI Operations Benchmarking Survey, 2019). We set the goal to achieve and maintain a cancellation rate of 5% or less for same-day cancellations of colonoscopies by July 2023.

In December 2022, fifteen out of 161 colonoscopy cases were cancelled the same day of their scheduled procedure, or 9%. This was significantly higher than our set goal of 5%, as well as the national average.

Losing 9% of the colonoscopy cases represents lost revenue for the center. At \$900 per case lost, fifteen cases per month cost the center an estimated \$13,500, or \$162,000 per annum.

## THE GAP

Many factors lead to high cancellation rates. Our patients stated confusion with the colonoscopy prep leading to poor compliance. Some patients simply forgot their appointments, while others just misplaced their colonoscopy preparation instructions.

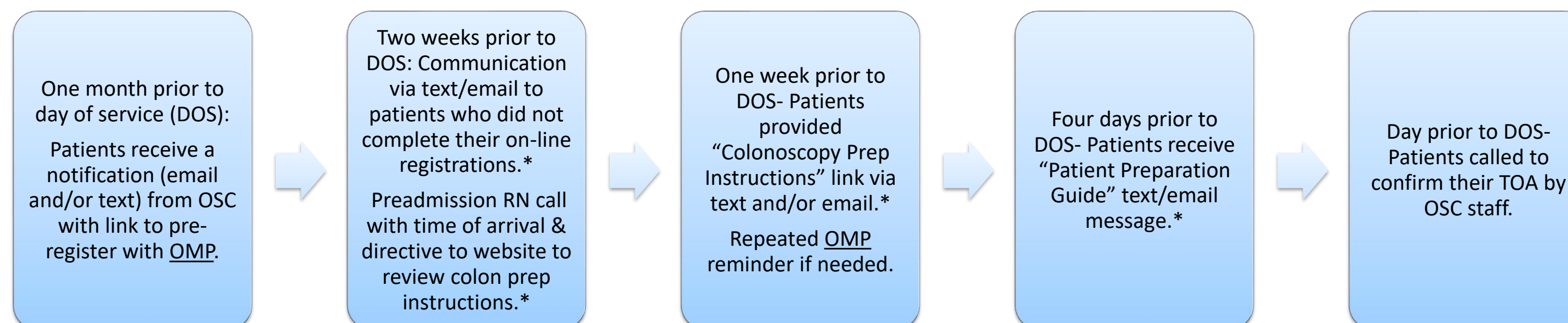
We reviewed the reminder process for appointments. The gastroenterology practice routinely mailed a paper copy of the colonoscopy prep instructions. The surgical center contacted the patients via emails and/or texts to pre-register with One Medical Passport (OMP). The pre-admission nurse called the patient two weeks prior to their appointments to provide the time of arrival and instructions. Administrative staff from the surgical center called with an appointment reminder on the day prior to the procedure.

## CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Adherence with colonoscopy preparation instructions requires meaningful engagement with patients combined with reliable instructions. We scrutinized the content of the colonoscopy prep instructions and discovered a lack of clarity. Therefore, the colonoscopy preparation instructions were significantly revised by the QM in consultation with the gastroenterologist and pre-admission nurses. A shopping list was incorporated into the prep instructions, encouraging the patient to prepare in advance.

The process of mailing instructions months in advance was identified as ineffective, since many patients reported that they never received them or that they had lost them. Therefore, the instructions were integrated into the websites of both the practice and the surgical center in February of 2023, making them readily accessible.

The process of engaging patients with the center was evaluated and revised. It was discovered that the engagement platform available within the center's OMP (One Medical Passport) system was being under-utilized. The QM and preadmission nurses met with OMP to revise the content and frequency of communication between patients and OSC. The updated schedule of reminder texts and emails were activated by OMP on June 15<sup>th</sup> and are illustrated in the following graphic. \*Indicates New Intervention



## REMEASURE

The cases for July 2023 were reviewed and compared to the data collected in December 2022 by the QM. Only five of the 151 colonoscopy cases scheduled were cancelled the day of their procedure. The rate of same day cancellations was reduced from 9% to 3%, which is below the national average and exceeded our previously identified goal of 5% cancellation rate. Another round of data was gathered by the QM for the cases scheduled in October of 2023. Out of the 196 colonoscopy cases scheduled, 7 were same-day cancellations, which is a rate of 4%. We concluded that our interventions provided sustained results below our goal of 5%. We will continue to monitor rates of same day cancellations as a quarterly quality measure and submit the results to the Quality Improvement Committee and the Medical Executive Committee.

## COMMUNICATE

QI Study Progress and Results Reported to:  
Quality Improvement Committee: 2/14/2023, 5/3/2023, 8/30/2023, 10/11/2023  
Medical Executive Committee: 10/18/2023  
Governing Body: 11/14/2023  
Staff In-services: 2/21/2023, 7/10/2023

