



CASE STUDY

Leading medical center grows volumes, expands services and reduces cost by outsourcing laparoscopy management

► LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER, BROOKLYN, NY

Lutheran Medical Center (LMC), a 476-bed, Level I trauma center, was a recipient of the Distinguished Hospital Award for Clinical Excellence™ by HealthGrades and was recognized as one of the nation's top performance-improvement leaders by Solucient. Lutheran's OR suite, where more than 16,500 surgical procedures are performed each year, features 10 operating rooms, two cystoscopy rooms and three GI endoscopy rooms.

AT A GLANCE

At LMC, equipment and instrumentation issues negatively impacted efficiency. Preparing for minimally invasive surgery (MIS) in the operating room at Lutheran Medical Center was, at times, frustrating as the clinical staff had to constantly check the aging video and monitoring equipment. Instrument trays were sometimes incomplete, requiring replacement before procedures could begin.

A hospital-employed Biomedical Technician was assigned to start each day in the OR to prepare and check equipment, and then be available to return as necessary throughout the day. The OR assigned two additional Surgical Technicians to monitor equipment daily as time allowed.

These measures by the LMC staff ensured the hospital's patient outcomes remained at its award-winning level of excellence, but the fragmented nature of its efforts was negatively impacting the efficiency of the department. The hospital frequently experienced late starts for surgical procedures and reduced utilization of the OR suite. Delays led to increased overtime expenses as procedures stretched into the late afternoon and evening. Repair costs were rising and reusable instruments were being replaced with expensive disposable substitutes.

When a newly recruited surgeon expressed interest in establishing a bariatric program at LMC, the hospital knew it had to make changes in the OR

to take advantage of the opportunity. Expansion of the surgical program was enticing, but equipment and instrumentation issues would have to be addressed to assure success of a new service line.

After researching and weighing its options, LMC selected SpecialtyCare to provide comprehensive on-site management support for minimally invasive surgery procedures. The results have been outstanding.

"I have been consistently impressed with SpecialtyCare services and flexibility, and the company's commitment to continuous training for the Clinical Technicians. I can't imagine handling MIS services any other way."

— Jose Hernandez, RN

LMC's Vice President, Surgical Services

THE SOLUTION: SPECIALTYCARE OUTSOURCED MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGICAL SERVICES

The LMC/SpecialtyCare partnership includes the following features:

- SpecialtyCare provides a professionally trained Clinical Technician to support equipment and instrumentation before, during and after MIS procedures.
- All MIS instrumentation, including scopes, is owned and maintained by SpecialtyCare. Repair, loaner and other instrumentation expenses are

the responsibility of SpecialtyCare. Though LMC has some video and other MIS equipment through lease/repair agreements with various manufacturers, SpecialtyCare Clinical Technicians check, clean and maintain all equipment.

- SpecialtyCare provides and manages disposable supplies/accessories required for all General, Gynecological and ENT MIS procedures.
- A SpecialtyCare field manager provides both personnel and account oversight and assistance, and monitors the reporting process.
- SpecialtyCare is paid a set fee for each MIS procedure supported by SpecialtyCare Clinical Technicians.

TURNOVER TIMES CUT IN HALF, VOLUMES DOUBLE, REPAIR EXPENSES DISAPPEAR

Positive impact was felt in every aspect of the OR. From the surgeons to Central Processing to Biomedical Engineering, the improvement was almost immediate. The equipment issues for MIS procedures have disappeared, and the staff now says they have not had to rely on Biomed for anything other than routine preventative maintenance. Quality and functionality of the instrumentation have improved so dramatically that surgeons schedule procedures according to the availability of the SpecialtyCare Clinical Technicians.

Long-term results have been dramatic.

- On-time surgery starts range between 87 to 95 percent of cases.
- Average turnover time has been reduced from 63 to 30 minutes.
- Improved utilization of the day shift has significantly reduced overtime labor expenses.
- Minimally invasive surgical volume more than doubled.
- Procedure volume growth has been managed with no additional FTEs in the OR.

"I appreciate the fact that SpecialtyCare's core business is minimally invasive surgery management. They are not aligned with any particular manufacturer, and they are able to work easily with any manufacturer we choose."

— Jeff Sperling

LMC's Vice President, Purchasing

- LMC repair/replacement expenses for MIS-related instrumentation are essentially zero.
- Because of the success of the MIS program, SpecialtyCare has expanded from one to three Clinical Technicians.
- LMC has been named a Bariatric Surgery Center of Excellence by the American Society for Bariatric Surgery and has received the General Surgery Excellence award from HealthGrades.



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- **ABOUT SPECIALTYCARE:** SpecialtyCare brings the benefits of outsourced clinical services to hospitals across the country. We hire and train highly qualified clinicians — perfusionists, clinical technicians, surgical assistants and neurological monitoring technologists — who in turn provide exemplary service to our clients. The result: lower costs, better outcomes and fewer administrative headaches.

