



MEMO

To : All Doctors
From : Dr Lee Hoi Che, DMS—CAO
Date : 28 April 2010
Our Ref. : ACAO/M17/LHC/2010
Subject : Time out and skin marking

Dear Doctors,

Time-out before surgical operation is recommended by WHO as an important measure to ensure patient safety. In Time-out, the identity of the patient; the type of operation; the site of operation; the type of anesthesia to be administered and other relevant information are verified by the team together. The team comprises: the surgeon; the anesthetist; the nurse and also the patient before the commencement of the operation.

A pilot scheme has been introduced since January 2010 for the resident doctors and some teething problems have been solved and the process streamlined. The time required is comparatively short and the interference of the operation minimal. The hospital therefore plans to have full implementation of the Time-out in May 2010 and your cooperation is therefore critical in the success of the program.

Surgical site marking is also proven to be an important measure to ensure safe surgery. This issue has been discussed in the OT advisory committee on 19/4/2010. The following principles are concluded:

1. For surgical operations where a skin mark is necessary, the surgeon in charge should have it done prior to the operation i.e. any time as appropriate before the Time-out.
2. The marking should be clear and unambiguous preferably using an arrow sign +/- O.T. letter mark so that the issue of mirror image is avoided when the other side/limb is inadvertently imprinted.
3. For multiple operation sites, each site should be individually marked.



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The surgical site marking practice is recommended to be used immediately. If you have any question, please contact Ms YS Chan, SNO for clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lee Hoi Che
Director of Medical Services

c.c. CEO, CNO, SNO- Ms. Y.S. Chan