The WHO Surgical Safety Checklist was developed after extensive consultation aiming to decrease errors and adverse events, and increase team work and communication in surgery.

The theatre Safety Briefings and WHO Surgical checklists have been used for a number of years at York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, however, we continue to encounter Never Events such as wrong site surgery.

From recent SI investigations within the Trust the following recommendations have been made:
No procedure should be commenced before the time out is completed.
Limb marking must be visible after prepping i.e. positioned in such a way that it does not interfere with skin incision but is close enough to the site to not be obscured by drapes.
Minor operative procedures also require the use of a checklist.

Evidence from research and feedback from NHS operating theatre teams have identified the following benefits of the effective introduction of briefings and the Checklist:

- The Checklist encourages adherence to critical safety checks and increases the reliability of perioperative care.
- Team-working improves and there is a shared focus on quality and safety.
- Equipment needs and other patient-specific requirements are discussed, facilitating the efficient planning of procedures.
- Potential problems, such as a drug allergy or an incomplete consent form, are identified.
- The surgeon and other members of the team work in an environment in which there are fewer disruptions to the surgical flow.
- Learning from debriefings is translated into action to improve the smooth running of operating theatres.

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