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Case Study: Lebanon VA Medical Center
Implementation of the SwitchLane PeriOptimization System

Overview

The Lebanon VA Medical Center, part of VISN 4, faced growing inefficiencies in perioperative and dental scheduling due to reliance on outdated tools like Microsoft Outlook and limited VistA scheduling capabilities. In 2023, the facility implemented the **SwitchLane PeriOptimization System** – a modern, web-based platform fully integrated with Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA), Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS), VistA Scheduling Enhancements (VSE), Integrated Scheduling Service (ISS) and Consult Tracking Manager (CTM) to streamline operations, eliminate redundant workflows, and improve access to care.

The result: dramatic reductions in staff workload, enhanced accuracy, faster case turnover, and measurable time savings.

Background & Challenges

Lebanon VA's Surgical and Dental Services struggled with manual data entry, redundant systems, and inefficient patient tracking:

- **Outlook Scheduling Discontinued:** The VA banned Outlook for PHI/PII-related scheduling, forcing a transition.
- **VistA Limitations:** VistA Scheduling could not accommodate dynamic, multi-room surgical operations.
- **Failed Replacement Attempts:** A prior software solution failed to integrate with VistA, proving cumbersome and costly.
- **High Staff Burden:** Scheduling and reporting required manual data entry into multiple systems, increasing errors and staff overtime.

This inefficiency directly impacted patient access to surgical and dental care, staff morale, and compliance with VA directives.

Objectives

Lebanon VA's leadership sought a solution that would:

1. Provide a **long-term, integrated scheduling platform** for both OR and dental services.
2. Offer **real-time visual displays** of patient progress throughout the perioperative process.
3. **Integrate seamlessly with VistA and CPRS**.
4. Reduce manual data entry, improve accuracy, and enhance scheduling efficiency.
5. Improve **staff satisfaction and patient access** while maintaining VA cybersecurity compliance.
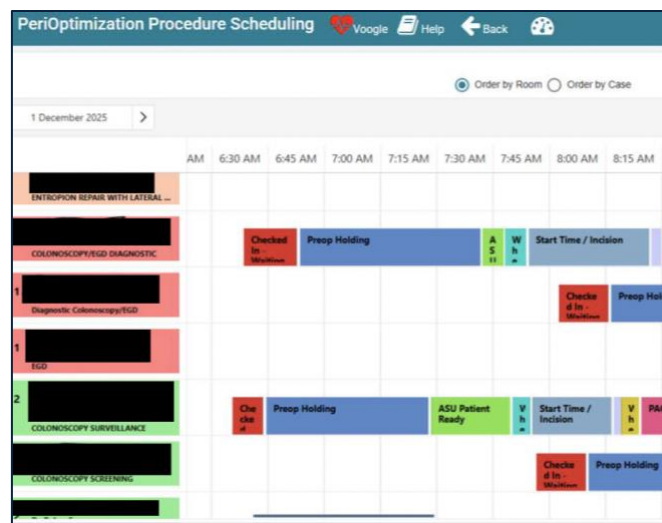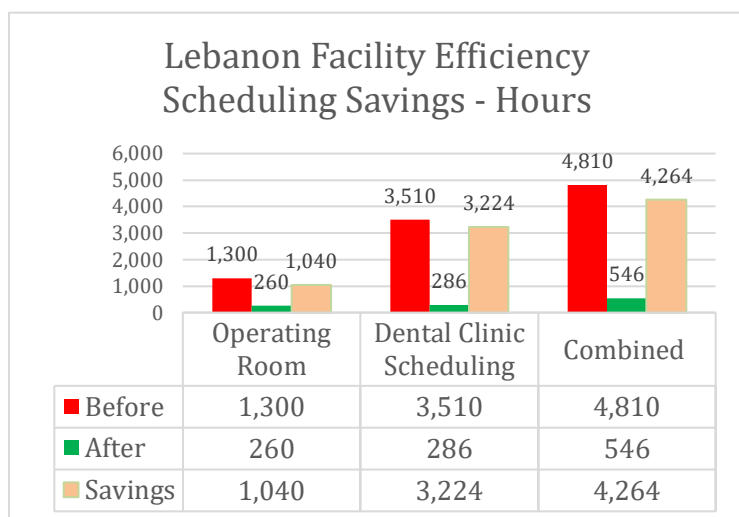
Results & Measurable Outcomes

The impact of SwitchLane was immediate and quantifiable across both perioperative and dental scheduling functions:

Metric	Before Implementation	After Implementation	Improvement
OR Scheduling Time	936 hrs/year	260 hrs/year	−78%
Dental Scheduling Time	3,510 hrs/year	286 hrs/year	−92%
Data Entry Time (Weekly)	16 hrs/week	1 hr/week	−94%
Lag Time/Turnover	Baseline	−20%	Improved throughput

National Extrapolation

- **$25.9 million** annual savings across all VA facilities
  - *NOTE: Potential from extrapolations if used in several VISNs.*
- **$207 million** cost avoidance over 8 years[1]
  - *NOTE: Potential from extrapolations if used in several VISNs.*

Lebanon Facility Efficiency Scheduling Savings - Hours

	Operating Room	Dental Clinic Scheduling	Combined
Before	1,300	3,510	4,810
After	260	286	546
Savings	1,040	3,224	4,264

Operational & Human Impact

Efficiency:
SwitchLane PeriOptimization System eliminated manual data duplication, automatically synchronizing entries between VistA, CPRS, and SwitchLane. Operating Room (OR) and Dental teams gained visibility into real-time surgical status, allowing for precise resource allocation and faster case turnover.

Staff Satisfaction:
Schedulers, nurses, surgical managers and coordinators reported significantly lower burnout and improved morale. The Surgical Operations Manager reduced scheduling workload from 16 hours per month to 6 hours, freeing time for higher-level management tasks.

Accuracy & Compliance:
Automated population of VistA records and CPRS notes eliminated transcription errors and ensured HIPAA and VA Technical Reference Model (TRM) compliance.

Patient Experience:
SwitchLane PeriOptimiation's visual patient tracking board displayed real-time updates for surgical staff and waiting family members, improving communication and reducing anxiety. Includes FedRamp secure messaging to families and drivers who may stay in the waiting room, but no longer need to sit and wait at the facility.

Actual Survey Completed by Lebanon VAMC Quality Improvement Department

Of a sample size of 23 employees using the Perioperative Enterprise Resource Platform:

- **87% prefer the PeriOp and Dental Scheduling** system compared to the previous system with Outlook, VISTA DOS, and CPRS.
- **96% reported their job is easier/simpler** with the Perioperative Enterprise Resource Platform.
- Overall satisfaction was rated at a **4.3/5**.
- Overall rating regarding time saved to schedule, cancel, and reschedule was **4.48/5**.

Lessons Learned

1. **Avoid Rebuilding Legacy Systems:** Attempting to replicate outdated VistA processes proved inefficient. The SwitchLane PeriOptimization System succeeded by modernizing workflows, not mimicking them.
2. **Iterative Implementation:** Agile deployment with user feedback ensured adoption and minimized disruption.
3. **Standardization Challenges:** Each VA facility has unique VistA configurations—customization options must remain flexible.
4. **Cultural Buy-In Is Critical:** Transparent communication and leadership advocacy accelerated staff adoption.

Conclusion

The Lebanon VA Medical Center's implementation of the SwitchLane PeriOptimization System demonstrates how targeted modernization can improve operational efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance both staff and patient experience within the VA framework.

The SwitchLane PeriOptimization System proved that modernization does not require disruptive system overhauls—only smart integration. The success at Lebanon VA positions the SwitchLane PeriOptimization System as a **model for nationwide VISN adoption**, capable of generating millions in savings while improving patient access to surgical and dental care.

"PeriOp PRO allows us to do more with less and manage surgery operations better. It empowers fewer staff to handle increased workload and procedural volume through IT innovation and modernization."
–Surgical Operations Manager, Lebanon VA

1. PeriOptimization – Optimizing VA Efficiency 2025; *Data on file*