

## **Building Strong Partnerships Between Anesthesia Providers and Facilities**

The healthcare landscape is constantly evolving, presenting anesthesia providers and facilities with new challenges, particularly in terms of reimbursement and provider compensation. In response to these challenges, there is a growing need for anesthesia groups and facilities to collaborate more closely than ever before to make sure finances are in place to insure continuous coverage. Establishing a mutually beneficial partnership is essential, and this blog post will explore strategic approaches that can help build a lasting and successful relationship between anesthesia providers and facilities.

### **Open Communication: The Foundation of Success**

Effective communication serves as the bedrock of any successful partnership. Anesthesia groups and facilities should prioritize open and regular dialogue to address financial concerns and local compensation trends. Here are some key aspects to consider:

**Quarterly Touchpoints:** Setting up quarterly meetings to review the current financial state of the anesthesia group and local compensation trends provides a structured platform for discussions. These touchpoints offer an opportunity to openly address challenges, opportunities, and upcoming headwinds.

**Advance Notice:** When seeking stipends or making requests, it's crucial to provide ample notice. Facilities often have budgets to manage, and communicating well in advance of their budgeting process increases the likelihood of receiving approval for the requested cost.

### **Using Analytics to Communicate the Problem**

Data-driven decision-making is indispensable in the healthcare industry. Anesthesia providers can utilize analytics to demonstrate the factors contributing to stipend requirements. Consider the following areas:

**Call Coverage:** Analyzing call coverage data can identify gaps or overutilization. A well-structured call schedule can reduce costs and enhance efficiency. Communicating the cost of low utilization calls and the cost associated with this is a key talking point.

**Low Utilization:** Identifying instances of underutilized resources allows for exploration of ways to optimize staff and OR time.

**Turnover Time/Flip Rooms:** Evaluating the efficiency of room turnovers and identifying opportunities for streamlining the process can lead to cost savings. Helping facilities understand the anesthesia cost of flip rooms, which may be beneficial for the facilities in terms of facility fees, is another key talking point

**Late Starts:** Analyzing start times for procedures can help minimize delays and maximize productivity.

**Unnecessary Add-ons:** Reviewing the use of unnecessary add-on services and assessing their impact on costs can reveal potential cost-saving opportunities.

### **Offering Value in Return for Stipends**

A successful partnership is a two-way street. Anesthesia providers can offer value to facilities in exchange for stipends. Consider the following approaches:

**Committee Seats:** Offering to participate in facility committees can provide valuable input and assistance in decision-making processes.

**Cost Reduction:** Collaborating on initiatives to reduce costs in other areas, such as supply chain management or process improvement, demonstrates a commitment to cost-efficiency.

**At-Risk Performance Metrics:** Suggesting that a portion of the stipend increase be contingent on meeting controllable metrics reassures facilities that they are receiving value for their investment.

### **Exploring Alternative Contract Models**

Traditional contract models may not always be the best fit for every situation. Anesthesia groups and facilities should explore alternative models that align with their goals and risk tolerance:

**Cost Plus:** Consider a cost-plus model with a lower margin to reduce risk for both parties. This approach can be especially beneficial for facilities in growth mode giving the facility the ability to quickly add more OR time.

**Revenue Guarantees:** If a facility aims to increase utilization, offering a revenue guarantee that ties stipend reductions to increased case volume can be a win-win solution.

These are just a few examples of how your group can align incentives with your facility.

### **Offering Action Plans to Lower Costs**

Proactive cost management is crucial in healthcare. Anesthesia providers can propose actionable plans to help facilities reduce costs:

**Closing ORs:** Evaluating the feasibility of temporarily closing operating rooms during low-demand periods can lead to substantial cost savings.

**Call Requirement Adjustments:** Modifying call requirements based on actual utilization patterns optimizes staffing and resource allocation.

**CRNA or Medical Direction Ratio:** Exploring the possibility of expanding the use of Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) or adjusting the medical direction ratio can further optimize resource allocation. Working with the facility on a “phased” approach can also insure change to the facility and stability to your group.



Building a lasting and successful relationship between anesthesia providers and facilities requires strategic thinking and a commitment to collaboration. By fostering open communication, leveraging analytics, offering value in return for stipends, exploring alternative contract models, and providing actionable plans to lower costs, both parties can achieve their financial goals while delivering high-quality patient care.

At **Anesthesia Operations Consultants** we specialize in helping anesthesia providers and facilities navigate these complex challenges and develop effective strategies for sustainable partnerships. Contact us today to learn how our consulting services can support your journey toward a mutually beneficial relationship. Together, we can achieve excellence in healthcare delivery while optimizing financial outcomes.

This article, jointly published by Lumina Health Partners and Anesthesia Operations Consultants, underscores the importance of professional guidance in these tumultuous times. We offer a suite of services tailored to address these specific issues and empower anesthesia groups to navigate complexities with confidence.

Please see Lumina Health Partners at <https://anesthesiaoperationsconsultants.com/>.