

CIMIT Reaps Rewards for Patients

The future of the operating room is now. CIMIT, the Center for Integration of Medicine and Innovative Technology, reported a tremendous success story at its Annual Stakeholders Briefing in October. The “Operating Room of the Future” is fully functional at MGH and in August, Dr. Keith Isaacson performed the first surgery in the cutting-edge facility. Dr. Isaacson was able to remove a 14-centimeter uterine fibroid tumor from a patient with just a 1-centimeter incision. The operation took place on a Thursday, the patient went home the same day, and she was back at work on Monday. Normally, a patient would require about six weeks of recovery before returning to work. It is the type of story that makes a development officer’s job easier and CIMIT consultant Ron Stone is using this and other stories in his work.

The new technique is possible because of two CIMIT initiatives: “Fast Forward” and the development of the “OR of the Future (ORF)”.



“Fast Forward” is a program that underwrites physicians who hear about a new technique outside of the Partners System. The program pays for the doctor to go to the other medical center, learn the procedure, and bring it back to Partners. In Dr. Isaacson’s case, “Fast Forward” sent him to Milwaukee, Chicago, and San Ramon, CA., where he learned how to remove large uterine fibroids laparoscopically. He then returned to Boston and has since performed over 50 such operations. “Fast Forward” allows PHS physicians to introduce new technologies and medical innovations to their patients

much more rapidly than if they did not have the opportunity to travel and learn from others around the world.

The ORF, a CIMIT/MGH collaborative effort, is a state-of-the-art operating room that will serve as a beta site for newly approved surgical and information systems technologies. Through its innovative architectural design, inclusion of the latest high tech equipment, and dedicated team of physicians, nurses, biomedical engineers, OR administrators, information systems experts and industry partners, the project aims to:

- Improve patient flow and patient comfort
- Reduce turnover time to enhance productivity
- Enhance anesthesia efficiency
- Enable network connectivity between medical devices
- Improve the ability to track patients, staff, and equipment
- Improve operating room ergonomics
- Improve inventory management
- Educate and credential end-users efficiently in the safe and proper use of new devices
- Measure the effect of this integrated environment in relation to patient safety, cost, and resource efficiencies.

Says Dr. Isaacson of his first case in the ORF: “This particular case tested my limits for performing a laparoscopic myomectomy. I was willing to proceed because of the systems created in the new ORF at MGH. In this room, we have optimal visibility, improved ergonomics, which are critical for a difficult, lengthy case, and all of the equipment necessary to ensure the case will proceed safely.”

Newton Wellesley Hospital has also recently constructed an ORF suite. The ORF and its successful activities are a prime example of the PHS philosophy of bringing medical innovations from the academic centers to our communities.