Quality Care for Surgery Patients

Society for Vascular Surgery’s Vascular Quality Initiative

www.nshealth.ca
Supporting Quality Care

- Developed by surgeons, the program aims to improve the quality, safety, and effectiveness of surgical care. The program makes hospitals aware of issues patients may have during or after their surgery. The VQI also uses info from your one-year followup appointment to check for long-term complications. Knowing about these issues helps us to improve.
- There are 2 sites in Nova Scotia taking part in this project: QEII Health Sciences Centre (Halifax Infirmary site) and Valley Regional Hospital. They are joining more than 600 hospitals in North America, including hospitals in Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec.

How does the VQI work?

- The VQI can help us make surgeries safer. It can also help us make sure that patients have the best possible results from their surgeries. Surgical Clinical Nurse Reviewers review the 9 most common vascular surgeries done at NSHA. These Registered
Nurses care about your well-being and want to learn from your experience. They will use charts to collect info about your health and surgery. For example, they will look at info about your health history, surgeries you have had, and any complications you may have had.

- These nurses will also contact patients about 30 days after surgery to ask followup questions. It is up to you whether or not you take part. It usually takes less than 10 minutes to answer the questions, and you can stop at any time.
- Questions may include:
  - “Did you see a doctor or another care provider after your surgery?”
  - “Did you have an infection, fever, or breathing problems?”
- Nurses will enter the data they collect into the SVS VQI database. The SVS VQI will analyze the info and compare it to other hospitals. This info will tell us where there are gaps in care and how we can improve.
Is my personal info safe?

• We are committed to protecting your personal health info. We do not enter any info into the database that could be used to identify you.

How will this data help?

• The SVS VQI will review and analyze the data. The SVS VQI will report back to us and highlight what we are doing well and what we could be doing better. For example, they will tell us if we are above or below average in areas such as rates of stroke and surgical site infections after surgery, etc.

• Our teams will look closely at these reports to understand the reasons behind our results. From there we will set targets and make plans to help us do better.
Why do you follow up 30 days and one year after surgery?

• Complications can often happen after a patient has left the hospital. Following up with patients after they go home can help us find and track issues. This will help us make changes to care that affect patients after their hospitalization.

One-year followup appointment

• Vascular patients often need ongoing treatment and monitoring. This is because vascular conditions are often related to other long-term health problems, such as diabetes, obesity, smoking, and coronary artery disease.

• We will contact you about one year after your surgery to plan a followup visit with your surgeon. Your surgeon may ask if you have been taking your discharge medications. They may also ask you to have tests (e.g., a CT scan) done to make sure everything is healing well.
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Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources. For more information, go to http://library.novascotia.ca

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: Call 811 or visit https://811.novascotia.ca

Learn about other programs and services in your community: Call 211 or visit http://ns.211.ca

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.