

Mass General Brigham Incorporated

DON # MGB-23120412-AM

APPLICANT RESPONSES

Responses should be sent to DoN staff at DPH.DON@State.MA.US

While you may submit each answer as available, please

- List question number and question for each answer you provide
- Submit responses as a separate word document, using the above application title and number as a running header and page numbers in the footer
- We accept answers on a rolling basis however, when providing the answer to the final question, submit all questions and answers in order in one final document.
- Submit responses in WORD or EXCEL; only use PDF's if absolutely necessary. **Whenever possible, include a table in data format (NOT pdf or picture) with the response.**

In order for us to review this project in a timely manner, please provide the responses by February 7, 2024.

Response Rationale

As you evaluate the answers below, please note that there is no exact metric or mechanism to measure the shift of outpatient surgical case volume from the MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham as each year's surgical population is unique. MGH has instead focused on performing cases in the medically appropriate location to meet patient needs. There are two main strategies MGH employs to accomplish this: 1) The MGH Operating Room Block Governance Committee allocates surgeon-specific operating room time based on a surgeon's specific patient population/patient acuity (i.e. surgeons performing high acuity cases receive MGH Main Campus time, surgeons performing lower acuity cases receive MG Waltham time); 2) Prior to surgery, patients are clinically evaluated to confirm they meet location specific acuity criteria (e.g., MG Waltham has a lower BMI threshold than the MGH Main Campus). The aggregate trends presented in this document indicate these strategies have resulted in a shift of outpatient cases from the MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham.

Project Description

1. **Are the three proposed OR's being transferred from MGH Main Campus? If so, will MGH be deactivating their ORs once moved to MG Waltham?**

Yes, the three proposed ORs are being transferred from MGH Main Campus. MGH has the authority for 71 operating rooms at its main campus. Consistent with industry practice, MGH has tracked it's out of service operating rooms. MGH will transfer three of its out of service ORs to Waltham and will surrender the right to operate two more ORs that are out of service. In total, the right to 5 ORs will be deactivated at the Main Campus in exchange for the ability to open 3 ORs at MG Waltham.

Rationale For Change

2. **The Applicant notes a high volume of surgeries over the past two years of operation. Is the volume from MGB patients/patients shifted from MGH Main Campus, or from new patients?**

The growth in volume at MGH Waltham is driven primarily by a shift in outpatient cases from the MGH Main Campus, as well as some organic growth in outpatient case volume. Specific to the shift of outpatient cases, the percentage of MG Waltham Outpatient Cases divided by Total Outpatient Cases (*MG Waltham Outpatient Cases + MGH Main Campus Outpatient Cases*) grew from 25% in FY21 to 39% in FY23. This data indicates there was a deliberate shift of outpatient cases from the MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham. This has been achieved through the MGH OR Block Governance Committee, which is responsible for assigning surgeon block time to OR locations that match patient acuity.

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- 3. How do the MG Waltham wait times for surgery compare with wait times for other surgical facilities serving similar acuity levels in the area?**

MGH does not have access to wait times for surgical facilities that are not affiliates of the Mass General Brigham (MGB) system. Looking at wait times for outpatient surgery at locations within the MGB system from October 1, 2023 through February 5, 2024, the average outpatient case wait time from the time a case was requested to the time the case was performed was 44 days.

The table below details wait times by MGB surgical facility:

Surgical Facility	Wait Time
MGH Main Campus	42 days
MGH Danvers	39 days
MGH Waltham	37 days
NWH	55 days
BWH Falkner	43 days
North Shore Medical Center	44 days

- 4. Please project how the Applicant expects the additional OR's will impact wait times for surgery.**

Wait times at MG Waltham will likely remain flat or lower than the FY23 baseline due to the objective of shifting cases from the MGH Main Campus and accommodating some new outpatient demand. There are demand-related variables that will impact wait times such as an aging population resulting in increased demand and national trends in shifting inpatient care to outpatient settings (i.e., changes in what Medicare allows to be performed as outpatient surgery), making it difficult to project actual wait times for MG Waltham.

- 5. Does the projected increase in volume solely represent a shift of lower acuity patients from MGH or increase in overall volume?**

The projected growth in volume at MGH Waltham is driven by 1) a shift of outpatient cases from the MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham, and 2) projected new outpatient case volume. Related to the first driver, it is expected that the open surgical time gained on the MGH Main Campus through this decant strategy will allow for the backfill of higher acuity cases. In general, for every two outpatient cases decanted from the MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham, the open MGH Main Campus time will be backfilled with one higher acuity case (average case length on the MGH Main Campus is 2.8 hours while the average case length at MG Waltham is 1.4 hours).

- 6. The Applicant provided a table showing the historical surgical volume by specialty. Please provide a breakdown of how many of these cases were shifted from MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham since FY2022.**

As stated in the Response Rationale section of this document, MGH cannot measure a shift in volume given that there is a unique patient population each year. Instead, MGH has focused on strategic assignments of surgeon block time based on historical patient acuity and resource needs with the expectation that patients will receive care in the appropriate location to match their specific needs. As detailed in response #2, the aggregate data demonstrates there has been a shift of cases from MGH Main Campus to MG Waltham.