What example shows the difference between allocating OR time based on OR efficiency versus OR utilization?

Consider a service with total hours of elective cases including turnover times averaging 5 hours every Monday. The service was allocated a single OR for 8 hours. Then, its adjusted utilization is 62%. There are 3 hours of under-utilized time and 0 hours of over-utilized time. Because there are no over-utilized hours, allocation based on OR efficiency is identical to allocation based on OR utilization. In contrast, suppose that the same surgical suite has 3 of its 8 ORs as unblocked, open, first-come first-served, other time. The surgical suite staffs in 8 hr, 10 hr, and 13 hr shifts, where 13 hr = 40 hours a week / 3 days per week. Then, those 3 ORs could be allocated as 8/8/8, 8/8/10, 8/10/10, 10/10/10, 8/8/13, 8/13/13/, 13/13/13, 8/10/13, 10/10/13, and 10/13/13. Only by calculations based on the inefficiency of use of OR time, which considers both expected under-utilized and over-utilized hours of OR time, can a good staffing decision be made. Click here for an older review article and click here for the most recent one. Click here for a paper with multiple other examples of decisions in the OR scheduling office that are different between reducing the hours of over-utilized time versus increasing adjusted utilization. To see examples of the calculations themselves, use the first ten pages of the sample report for my course.

Return to Frequently Asked Questions