How to thrive in the growing ASC and OBL landscape — Insights from market experts

Ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) and office-based labs (OBLs) are becoming more prominent fixtures in the healthcare landscape, amid the continued migration of procedures to the outpatient setting. Opening and running one of these facilities, however, is complex. Physicians must deliver high-quality care consistently, while simultaneously remaining flexible enough to pivot as reimbursement rules evolve and patient needs change.

Becker’s ASC Review recently spoke with two healthcare experts about Medtronic and GE Healthcare’s new collaboration designed to support ASCs and OBLs:
- Adam King, senior director of U.S. enterprise accounts, Medtronic
- Craig Dickinson, national sales director, interventional and ASC market leader, GE Healthcare

To deliver the same quality as hospitals, outpatient facilities need the right capital equipment coupled with the most advanced medical device technology

ASC and OBL leaders strive to deliver high-quality care. “The last thing that outpatient facilities want is an adverse outcome,” Mr. Dickinson said. “These organizations are really concerned with quality, and they want equipment that will support the same level of care that patients receive at the hospital.”

However, outpatient facility owners also tend to be quite sensitive to price when it comes to capital equipment. The equipment needs of an ASC or OBL can vary from very basic capital, like an ultrasound machine, all the way up to more complex imaging equipment.

“This initiative aims to give ASC and OBL operators peace of mind by combining the capabilities of two world-class, high-quality healthcare technology companies that can help them navigate barriers to entry,” Mr. Dickinson said. “Medtronic and GE Healthcare offer two of the widest wing-to-wing portfolios of devices and equipment for everything that an ASC or OBL might need today or tomorrow.”

Many ASCs and OBLs seek to deliver more comprehensive care by treating the whole patient

While multi-specialty ASCs are not new, additional cardiovascular procedures have recently been approved in this setting. When you add to that mix the varying rates of reimbursement for some related procedures, it creates unique opportunities for ASCs and OBLs to deliver more comprehensive care, benefiting patients. “The trend we are seeing in an accelerated fashion is the conversion from an OBL to an ASC, or at least a hybrid state,” said Mr. King. “That conversion allows for the expansion of procedures like percutaneous coronary intervention and primary pacemaker implantation in an ASC to the core OBL procedures such as atherectomies.” This expanding range of procedures allows for a greater treatment of the whole patient.

Medtronic and GE Healthcare have the depth of devices and equipment to help ASCs and OBLs meet this growing procedural diversity and, with the Medtronic Customer Choice Rebate Program, options to simplify and streamline their purchasing. “GE Healthcare is flexible enough to place capital now for standard OBL-type service lines like peripheral vascular and endovenous,” Mr. King said. “However, it can also pivot to a full fixed lab if an outpatient facility starts to move toward coronary or cardiac rhythm. These all happen to be service lines that Medtronic can also support.”

In today’s dynamic healthcare environment, flexibility is key for ASC and OBL operators

As outpatient procedure volumes shift and grow, outpatient facilities need to work with companies that can meet changing equipment requirements and support different types of cases. “Coming out of the pandemic, many of our customers have learned to be prepared for the unexpected and to think about the future,” Mr. Dickinson said. “That’s something we’re trying to tailor into the equipment offerings in our portfolio.”
Although there has been considerable focus recently on the expansion of cardiology procedures in ASCs, the market is still growing for pain, spine, and other areas. “Our two companies can help ASCs and OBLs pivot,” Mr. King said. “Payments can — and do — shift, so flexibility is essential. Medtronic and GE Healthcare offer two of the largest medical device and capital equipment portfolios respectively to support procedures, ranging from ultrasound machines to mobile and fixed c-arms equipment.”

Flexible and customizable

The Medtronic-GE Healthcare collaboration is designed to empower outpatient facilities with choice. “The most common theme I hear from customers is that they want incredible flexibility,” Mr. Dickinson said. “Our goal is to deliver a Swiss Army knife program that enables ASCs and OBLs to be prepared for whatever tomorrow brings.”

To learn more about new equipment as you build or expand an ASC or OBL, visit Medtronic at Medtronic.com/customerchoicerebate or GE at https://www.gehealthcare.com/specialties/outpatient-solutions.

¹The Expansion of Cardiovascular Procedures in the ASC Setting. Read more: https://www.sheppardhealthlaw.com/2020/05/articles/ambulatory-surgery-centers/cardiovascular-procedures-asc/