



Whitepaper

Delivering Results with ERAS®:

A Framework for Implementation and Ongoing
Excellence with a Proven Partner

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Notes

About Encare

Encare (www.encare.net) is the commercial partner of the ERAS® Society, delivering digital and implementation solutions to support structured, evidence-based implementation of Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS®) Protocols. With clients in over 30 countries across numerous surgical specialties, Encare is the global leader in ERAS® compliance and implementation solutions.

ERAS® Interactive Audit System (EIAS)

EIAS is a web-based audit and quality improvement platform developed in collaboration with the ERAS® Society. It enables hospitals to:

- Track protocol compliance in real time across the entire perioperative pathway.
- Analyze outcomes and deviations from best practice.
- Benchmark performance against leading global ERAS® centers.
- Streamline continuous quality improvement through actionable data insights.

EIAS is currently the *only* audit solution globally that integrates ERAS® Society-validated protocols and compliance logic in more than 10 surgical specialties, including ERAS® Essentials – a protocol applicable across various procedures.

ERAS® Implementation Program (EIP)

The ERAS® Implementation Program is a structured training and coaching methodology based on the IHI Breakthrough Series.

Delivered by Clinical Experts from the ERAS® Society, the EIP supports hospitals with:

- Hands-on change management tailored for perioperative teams.
- Multidisciplinary team training across surgical, anesthetic, and nursing staff.
- Data-driven performance tracking using EIAS.
- Pathway to ERAS® Qualification and global recognition.

Hospitals completing the EIP with demonstrated improvements in compliance and outcomes may become ERAS® Qualified Centers – an international recognition of excellence in perioperative care.

The Case for ERAS®: A Proven Approach to Improving Surgical Outcomes

ERAS® is a multimodal, evidence-based approach designed to enhance pre-, intra-, and postoperative care by improving a variety of factors. Studies confirm that higher ERAS® compliance has a causal effect on improved patient outcomes.

Key benefits include:

- Reductions in complications by up to 50% and postoperative morbidity by up to 42%
- Decreased length of hospital stay by 30-50%, enabling better resource allocation
- Up to 8% lower readmission rates, improving efficiency and reducing costs
- Enhanced patient experience and faster functional recovery

However, achieving these benefits requires both structured implementation and ongoing compliance monitoring. Without these two components, hospitals risk incomplete adoption, inconsistencies in adherence, and missed opportunities for improvement – all of which lead to poor ROI for the investments made in attempts to implement ERAS without the appropriate and proven tools.



Challenges with In-House ERAS Audit Solutions

Many hospitals attempt to develop their own ERAS compliance tracking solutions, often using existing Electronic Health Records (EHRs), spreadsheets, or business intelligence tools. While this approach may seem viable, it presents significant challenges:

1. High Costs and Extended Implementation Timelines

- Developing an in-house ERAS® audit system typically requires 6–9 full-time months of development with a dedicated coordinator plus a team of data managers, IT specialists, and clinical experts.
- Estimated costs are expected to be considerable, potentially approaching six figures in euros in the first year, with notable ongoing maintenance expenses in the following years.
- These delays and expenses can hinder hospitals from achieving timely compliance monitoring and quality improvements.

2. Lack of Standardization and Global Benchmarking

- In-house solutions require hospitals to interpret and translate ERAS® guidelines into their own data structures, clinical workflows, and tracking logic—often from scratch. This process is resource-intensive and prone to misalignment with established ERAS® standards.
- These local interpretations increase the risk of compliance gaps, inconsistent adherence measurement, and difficulty identifying areas for improvement.
- Without a standardized and validated data collection framework, hospitals also lose the ability to benchmark their performance against global ERAS® leaders or contribute to multicenter research, limiting both internal learning and external credibility.

3. Limited Analytical Capabilities

- Most in-house solutions lack advanced reporting tools, predictive analytics (on a group level), and compliance dashboards, making it difficult to extract actionable insights.
- As ERAS® guidelines evolve, in-house solutions require ongoing manual updates and IT interventions, creating additional resource burdens.
- Success relies on continuous data collection and analysis, alongside implementing solutions spurred by the insights obtained.
- Depending on the data capture tools used, staying on top of technological advancements will be more or less of a challenge.

4. Continuous Training and Implementation

- Staff across disciplines need continuous training on ERAS protocols, which can involve in-person sessions, workshops, or e-learning platforms. This includes everyone from surgeons to nursing to dietary staff.
- If only certain departments adopt ERAS (e.g., colorectal surgery but not ortho or OB/GYN), the benefits may be fragmented and harder to scale.
- There is a risk of inconsistent roll-out unless there is dedicated staff working on ERAS® training and implementation.

Given these challenges, a standardized, automated, and research-backed solution is necessary to effectively implement and sustain ERAS® Protocols, while working with an experienced team is critical to assist during implementation. Without these two components, hospitals risk incomplete adoption, inconsistencies in adherence, and missed opportunities for improvement.

EIP & EIAS: A Comprehensive Solution for ERAS® Implementation and Compliance

Achieving full ERAS® benefits requires both effective implementation and continuous compliance monitoring. While EIAS enables hospitals to track adherence and improve outcomes, successful ERAS® implementation is the foundation upon which compliance is built.

Step 1: ERAS® Implementation with EIP – Supported by EIAS

The ERAS® Implementation Program (EIP) is a globally proven framework for successfully implementing ERAS®, with over 300 teams worldwide utilizing its structured approach to transform perioperative care. However, implementation alone is not enough – EIAS is a necessary tool throughout the EIP process, enabling hospitals to identify and prioritize necessary process changes, measure progress, track compliance, and refine implementation strategies in real time.

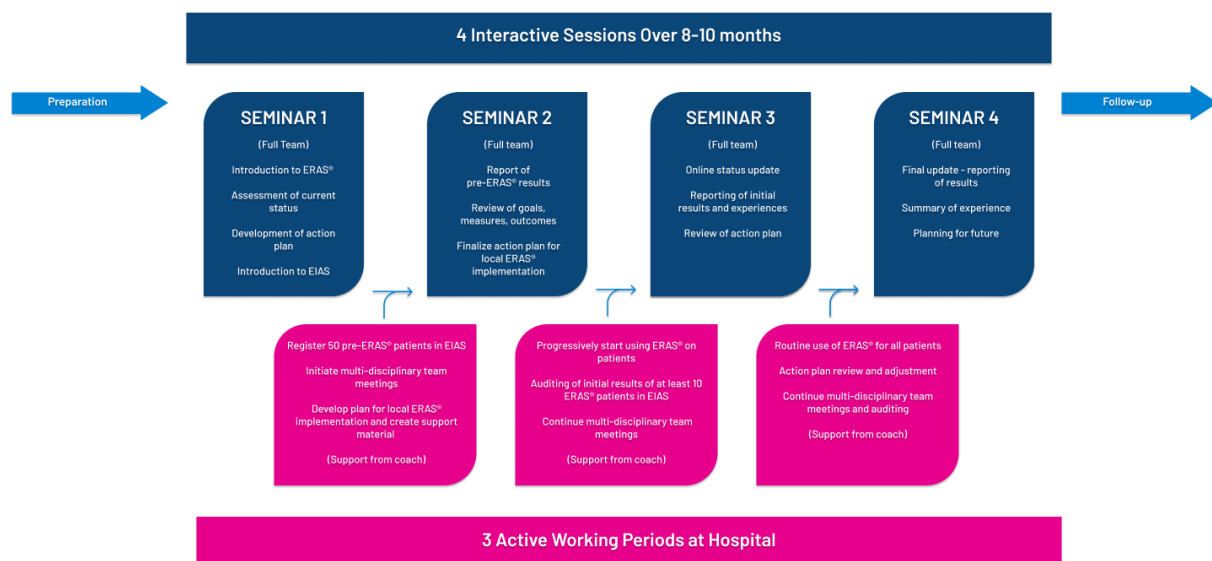
Hospitals choose EIP because:

- It is a structured and proven approach to process transformation, enabled by EIAS
- EIP has been successfully implemented in hospitals across 30+ countries, demonstrating its effectiveness in achieving sustainable ERAS® adoption.
- It ensures that surgical, anesthetic, nursing, and rehabilitation teams work together, addressing the multidisciplinary challenges of ERAS® implementation.
- EIAS plays a key role during EIP, allowing hospitals to monitor adherence from day one, ensuring ERAS® principles are applied consistently across teams, and identifying gaps early.
- It is a pathway to ERAS® Qualification and Recognition, with EIAS Ensuring Compliance.

- Hospitals that implement ERAS® through EIP may pursue ERAS® Qualification, defined and given by the ERAS® Society, a recognition of excellence in perioperative care.
- Being part of the prestigious ERAS® community allows hospitals to benchmark, collaborate, and participate in global research initiatives.
- EIAS ensures the data-driven compliance tracking required for hospitals to meet ERAS® Qualification standards, providing objective insights into adherence and performance.

Hospitals that complete EIP with the support of EIAS establish a strong foundation for ERAS®, ensuring sustainable clinical practice changes and preparing for long-term improvement.

The ERAS® Implementation Program outline follows a specific series of 4 scheduled workshops mixed with homework periods for projects to be carried out in the hospital. Everything is done with the support of Clinical Experts and ERAS® Coaches in the ERAS® Society. The program uses EIAS as a key vehicle to help monitor, control and change outdated clinical practice to that of evidence-based medicine. The program runs for a period of 10-12 months, please see the following image.



Step 2: ERAS® Compliance & Continuous Improvement with EIAS

Successful implementation of ERAS® is only the beginning. Without ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement, there is a risk that compliance declines over time, leading to regression in patient outcomes and reduced cost-effectiveness. Sustaining the clinical and operational gains of ERAS® requires continuous engagement, real-time data, and structured feedback loops. This is where the ERAS® Interactive Audit System (EIAS), Encare's proprietary software as a service solution, becomes indispensable to hospitals.

EIAS enables hospitals to:

- ✓ Track protocol adherence in real-time
- ✓ Identify gaps in implementation
- ✓ Benchmark with global ERAS® leaders
- ✓ Generate data-driven insights for continuous improvement

By combining EIP for structured implementation with EIAS for compliance monitoring from day one, hospitals gain a comprehensive solution that ensures sustained ERAS® success, superior patient outcomes, and optimized resource utilization.



Conclusion: A Smarter Approach to ERAS® Implementation

In an era where healthcare institutions must balance quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, ERAS® provides a well-established framework for surgical quality improvement. However, its success depends on thorough implementation, consistent compliance monitoring, and structured quality assessment.

By leveraging Encare's implementation program and software solution for structured ERAS® implementation and continuous compliance monitoring, hospitals gain a comprehensive, proven solution to enhance surgical outcomes, reduce complications, and optimize resource utilization. This option could prove to be less resource intensive than creating an in-house solution in terms of cost, labor, and time.

Next Steps

Hospitals committed to continuously improving patient outcomes by reducing complications in connection with surgery and thereby maximizing efficiency, should consider implementing ERAS® by utilizing the EIP and EIAS as an integrated solution for ERAS® success. To get started with implementing ERAS® today, you can book a demo with the Encare team here: <https://encare.net/book-demo/>

Encare can help review your current standard of care to assess your compliance with the core ERAS® elements and provide you with a comprehensive understanding of how effectively you are implementing ERAS® best practices, to identify gaps and areas where targeted improvements can be made to further improve your patients' outcome.



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