BACKGROUND INFORMATION:
Patient’s families/friends waited for long periods of time while loved ones were having surgery/procedures and no one communicated with them about how things were going. Volunteers attempted to keep them informed, but were not able to obtain pertinent information from the medical personnel so misinformation was often given. Physicians often could not locate family/friends when the procedures were completed to inform them of happenings. The patients were being well taken care of but no one was there for the family members or friends increasing their anxiety and stress.

OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT:
Support and facilitate continuity of care and communication between departments and across the continuum to ensure positive outcomes for patients and their families.

Communicate routinely with patients/families/medical staff to ensure correct and appropriate information is shared resulting in better informed patients and less anxious families.

Provide comfort and satisfaction to waiting family/friends.

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION:
Initially started program in 2005 with coverage Monday – Friday 8 hours a day with two nurses (one with perioperative experience and one with PACU ambulatory experience). Program now available Monday – Friday 12 hours per day.

STATEMENT OF THE SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:
Patient commented that “I am so glad you are here to care for my family while I am being well taken care of in surgery.” Patient/family satisfaction has improved since the implementation of the program. Quarterly communication scores have ranged from 74-85 since implementation of this program.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCING PERIANESTHESIA PRACTICE:
Patients and family/friends experience less stress when they are informed and educated about expectations. Perianesthesia staff are the experts who can provide this care, comfort and education.