Background: Traditionally, neurological assessments have been completed on patients who have neurosurgical operative or interventional procedures. All patients in the Postanesthesia Care Unit require a thorough neurological assessment after general anesthesia. The risk of stroke and neurological changes can be recognized at an early stage when nursing staff is skilled with a focused neurological assessment in the postanesthesia setting.

Objective of Project:
- Educate nursing staff in unit about normal neurological assessment.
- Educate staff on pupil changes, motor strength, what a drift signifies, and changes in orientation; and why these changes may indicate further medical evaluation or assistance is necessary.
- Increase knowledge of PACU nurses to decrease risk of poor patient outcome for patient if subtle neurological changes are not identified.

Process of Implementation:
- Provided in-service educational sessions for nursing staff using demonstration and hands-on training methods.
- Engaged nursing staff by active participation in educational sessions and presentation of abnormal neurological changes.
- Defined for staff the implications of declining neurological status and its significance.
- Developed presentation on pupil and gaze changes and implications of those changes.

Statement of Successful Practice: All perianesthesia nurses are completing accurate neurological assessments and recognizing alterations and appropriate responses to neurological assessment findings.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: The risk of stroke and neurological changes should be minimized for all postanesthesia patients. Nurses skilled in neurological assessment and recognition of alterations may reduce the risk of poor neurological outcomes in postanesthesia patients.