Patient and Family Experiences were reported to need improvement. RN’s in the Pacu setting were feeling stressed by the amount of time spent performing non-nursing duties. Employee satisfaction was decreasing while service quality to our patients and families were diminishing.

The objectives were to improve both patient and family experiences in the PACU and to increase employee satisfaction. Then PACU RN’s needed help in coordinating the families to visit their loved ones in a timely manner as well as assist with discharges.

The PACU notified the volunteer department and a volunteer coordinator along with a PACU RN volunteer liaison began implementing the plan to conquer the frustration of both families/patients and the RN’s in the PACU setting. An orientation package for the volunteers was developed along with training to familiarize the volunteer of the expectations. The volunteer program within the PACU has taken off and is a warm and welcome addition to our PACU family. The volunteers assist with keeping the families updated in the surgical waiting room, arranging visits quickly upon the patient arrival into the PACU, and assisting with transport to the valet upon discharge.

The PACU and Volunteer services used pre and post survey studies to collect solid data that proved a decrease in non-nursing activities from 30% to 10%. RN satisfaction increased by 44%, while patient and family satisfaction scores have increased.