ENSURING HOSPITAL WIDE MALIGNANT HYPERTERMIA COMPETENCY
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Patients in need of critical care are sometimes recovered from anesthesia in our Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) but may also be transferred directly an Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Nurses in these units were not familiar with care of the patient with or at risk for Malignant Hyperthermia (MH).

A team of educators and staff nurses from the PACU approached ICU Nursing Leaders regarding this subject and their concerns that patients may not receive the appropriate monitoring and treatment if signs and symptoms of MH were present. The PACU team created a hospital-wide policy for monitoring patients with a personal or family history of MH, as well as for treatment of the patient in MH crisis. The policy was presented to and approved by the ICU and Nursing Practice Councils for the hospital. Following policy approval, the PACU team developed an online educational module that is now mandatory for all ICU nurses annually. The module included information on detection, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, treatment, and ongoing monitoring.

The Malignant Hyperthermia policy is now used throughout the hospital and all ICU nurses successfully completed the initial offering of the online modules. Leaders from the ICU and Nursing Education verbalize the importance of this information, as an ICU nurse was recently asked about MH during a mock Joint Commission survey.

While the recovery of patients in non-PACU settings remains controversial, PACU nurses can reach out to their colleagues in the ICU setting to ensure post-surgical patients receive proper care.