THE PERIOPERATIVE NURSE LIAISON: IMPACT ON PATIENT, FAMILY, AND STAFF SATISFACTION
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Background/Problem Identification:
When a family or friend is having surgery, the surgical process is often unknown, frightening and intimidating for those in the waiting room. Recently patient satisfaction scores in the PACU decreased in three areas: 1) communication with family, 2) information regarding delays and, 3) calming fears. We recognized that we needed to develop a better communication process for our families and waiting patients, particularly as we moved to a new location with perioperative services divided between two floors. A literature review yielded limited research on this topic but did note that positions, such as a nurse liaison, increased patient/family satisfaction.

Objectives: To determine if the addition of a perioperative nurse liaison to surgical services would increase patient, family and staff satisfaction.

Implementation:
A family member satisfaction and needs assessment tool was developed, approved as IRB exempt and implemented to obtain pre-intervention data. Suggestions were also elicited from both surgical and nursing staff regarding the most important unmet needs to be addressed by this new position. A proposal to add this 1.5 FTE position was presented to administration and funds were allocated. Two RN’s were hired to cover 9A-9P Monday-Friday.

Successful Practice Identified:
Results from Healthstream™ scores revealed significant improved satisfaction with communication between staff, family and patients. Qualitative data including family member comments supported the positive impact of position. Staff also rated the role highly and noted improved work efficiency and decreased family and patient anxiety.

Implications for Perianesthesia Practice:
The addition of this specialized role to perianesthesia nursing can positively impact the satisfaction of the surgical patient, family, and staff.