Two staff nurses in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) of a 1200+ bed medical center were selected to take part in the Diabetes Mentor program. To become a Diabetes Mentor, training includes a two-day course on in-patient management of diabetes, and a one-day course on application at the nursing unit level. Monthly meetings are held with all Mentors, the coordinating Clinical Nurse Specialist, and the In-Patient Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE).

In the PACU setting, the objective of this program is to increase staff comfort and functional knowledge base when caring for patients with diabetes who have had surgery.

Our Diabetes Mentors provide monthly evidence-based practice and medication in-services. They are available to nurses and physicians for bedside consultation on issues such as management of insulin pumps and insulin infusions. The Mentors advocate for patients by facilitating discussions with physicians regarding appropriate orders for glucose control. The Diabetes Mentor can also place consults to the Inpatient CDE and/or the Endocrinology Department for patients with complex needs who will require follow-up care.

Since the program’s inception in June 2009, staff have consulted Mentors for issues and concerns. Nurses verbalize increased knowledge of glucose control and comfort with proper documentation of glycemic management.

Proper glucose control promotes wound healing and decreases risk of infection. Providing perianesthesia nurses with additional education and resources regarding proper glucose control in the immediate perioperative setting may improve patient outcomes.