A Position Statement on Workflow Interruptions, Technology, Social Media and Perianesthesia Practice

The American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASoP) has the responsibility for defining the principles of safe, quality nursing practice in the perianesthesia setting. This includes professional conduct which reflects an understanding and respect for the moral, ethical, and legal issues of perianesthesia practice. ASPAN, therefore, sets forth this position to acknowledge the impact of social media on clinical practice, patient safety, and professional behaviors.

Background

An expanding array of devices (including, but not limited to, smartphones, tablets, readers, netbooks, notebooks, and laptop computers) as well as the enhanced ease of access to the Internet have dramatically changed the ability of professionals and consumers to communicate, socialize, and find/share information at incredible rates of speed across the continents. Numerous social media sites allow for the ready access and sharing of news, information (personal and professional), images, and other content. Several basic media types currently exist. These more common platforms include virtual group rooms for information sharing, picture and video sharing sites, email, instant messaging, and virtual gaming.

In addition to the benefits associated with access to the social media world, there are a number of disadvantages for healthcare providers.* These include the potential for:

- Breach of privacy and confidentiality standards
- Violation of professional boundaries
- Abuse and/or misuse of technology both personally and professionally
- Questionable reliability of information sources from the Internet

Position

ASoP is highly committed as an advocate for a culture of safety and to the tenets of the Perianesthesia Principles for Ethical Practice in all perianesthesia practice settings, for the patient, the nurse, and the healthcare team. This commitment includes the impact of technology on perianesthesia practice. ASoP provides the following recommendations when considering the use of social media:

- The privacy and confidentiality of patients will be maintained at all times

*There are numerous examples of litigation claims associated with the inappropriate use of social media. The following list includes a few examples that have been publicly noted:

- An RN who took a picture of a man during noninvasive procedure and posted it on Facebook
- An RN who sent text messages to another nurse and physician describing a challenging interaction between a sick child and his mother
- An RN who shared a photo on Instagram depicting an empty trauma room where a patient had been treated for a gruesome injury
• Peri-anesthesia registered nurses will refrain from posting or commenting on any negative reflections of colleagues, employers, patients, or clinical situations in a public social media forum
• Perianesthesia registered nurses will protect their personal information in public social media forums
• Perianesthesia registered nurses will know and endorse institutional policies and procedures related to social media and digital technology
• Perianesthesia registered nurses will know and endorse institutional policies and procedures related to patient/family/visitor utilization of digital technology
• Clinical leadership will provide mechanisms to report any observed breach
• Educational curriculum will support education providing principles of professionalism, privacy, and confidentiality
• Consider the reliability of the source when utilizing the Internet for medical information
• Perianesthesia registered nurses will refrain from using digital means of socializing during patient care and work hours

**Expected Outcomes**

ASSPAN recognizes the added value that digital and social media brings to peri-anesthesia practice as well as the consequences that improper use of digital and social media can raise. Creating and maintaining a healthy work environment and relationship to digital and social media are essential priorities for peri-anesthesia registered nurses.

**Approval of Statement**

This statement was recommended by a vote of the ASPAN Board of Directors on April 13, 2013, and approved by a vote of the ASPAN Representative Assembly on April 14, 2013, in Chicago, Illinois.

This position statement was updated and revised at the October 2017 meeting of the Standards and Guidelines Strategic Work Team in Dallas, Texas.

**REFERENCE**

BIBLIOGRAPHY


