

**THE PERIANESTHESIA LIAISON NURSE:
BRIDGING COMMUNICATIONS... PATIENTS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND
HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**

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Background: Surgery can provoke anxiety not only for patients but also for the family members. Both real and perceived fears are felt during these times. Among them are fear of the unknown, utter confusion, money woes, job loss, disruption of routines and the unfamiliar hospital environment.

Objectives: The first objective is to provide patient and family centered care in the perioperative setting that is aligned with the institution's service culture of "Faithful Loving Care". Another objective is to meet the needs of the family members, such as those identified by Leske: the need for reassurance, to be close to their loved one, updates and information, relaxed environment, and available advocate.

Implementation: Family members have an important role to fill in the overall patient experience; therefore it is essential to include them in the plan of care. As part of the ongoing initiatives to meet family members' needs, a liaison nurse position was established. Two nurses on a rotating basis and a third nurse for backup were appointed for consistency. The three nurses and the manager met to establish guidelines. In collaboration with the PACU liaison a greater understanding of respective roles emerged. The main function of the liaison nurse is to bridge the communications among all concerned parties.

Successful Practice: Since the initiation of this role, the information gap has lessened among family members. Additionally, family satisfaction has increased. Family members claim that the liaison nurse helps them cope with the waiting time.

Implications: The role of the liaison nurse in the perianesthesia period is critical given the complexity of patient and family treatment; it is valuable as a source for updating, sharing feelings, and supporting family members.