

**THE HEART OF THE FUTURE: THE EVOLUTION OF A COMPREHENSIVE
PEDIATRIC CARDIOVASCULAR PERIANESTHESIA UNIT**

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Background:

In 2012 the Pediatric Cardiovascular (CV) Service Line transitioned from UAB Hospital, a primarily adult academic medical center, to Children's of Alabama (COA), a free standing Children's Hospital. As part of the transition planning, a newly dedicated cardiac perianesthesia unit (CPU) was created to incorporate pre-operative/procedure, post anesthesia care, and phase II recovery.

Objectives:

The primary objective was to seamlessly transition UAB Hospital's pediatric cardiac service to COA and expand pediatric cardiac services offered to the community. One major task during the transition was to establish the identity of the new unit, including developing staff roles, staffing plans and recruiting nurses for the new unit.

Implementation:

During the planning process, specialized individuals from a variety of disciplines contributed personal knowledge to ensure a smooth transition. Recruited staff from UAB Hospital and COA began orientation and training at COA to gain expertise in perianesthesia nursing. The Employee Retention Committee was created to promote self-governance and encourage cohesion among the new unit's nursing staff members. Committee members worked to establish nursing roles and develop self-scheduling staffing patterns.

Implication for Perianesthesia Nursing Practice:

The major lesson learned from our experiences was that the key to building a new unit and cohesive staff requires all stakeholders to be willing to embrace change and adapt to changes in practice.

Statement of the successful practice:

The creation of the CPU has been a success. The unit is now a well functioning entity with a cohesive staff, minimal turnover and high employee satisfaction levels.