

INCREASING PATIENT SATISFACTION BY EMPOWERING STAFF TO MANAGE DELAYS

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Background: A challenge nurses face working in a high volume, fast-paced, perioperative same day surgery unit is managing patient procedure delays. Procedure delays can increase patients' anxiety and decrease their overall satisfaction. Nurses may feel helpless and limited in their options to improve the patient and family-centered care experience. Orlando's Nursing Process Theory guided this initiative by meeting patients' immediate needs for help and responding with an intervention.

Objective: Manage patient delays to their satisfaction by keeping them informed and offering service recovery. The new service recovery option coined as the "courtesy bag" provided diversional activities, such as a puzzle book, deck of cards, pen, pad, and lip balm. The bag was given by the nurse with an apology card that recognizes the patient's time and empowered the nurse to make a difference.

Implementation: This pilot included 372 patients over a 14 month period in which the bag was given to any patient who experienced a delay beyond an hour. The patients and nurses were surveyed regarding their satisfaction with the new service recovery option.

Statement of Successful Practice: Patients (98%, n=366) felt the bags were helpful, utilized the contents, and reported we managed their delay to their satisfaction. The nurses felt empowered to manage patient wait times (95%, n=20) and would like to continue their use (100%, n=22).

Implications for Advancing Practice in Perianesthesia: The total cost of each bag is \$2.84, which is a nominal amount given the gain in satisfaction by patients and nurses. The pilot evolved into a change of practice...the "courtesy bag" is here to stay!