

## **BREAK A HABIT AND SAVE SOME BANK!**

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### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Historically, the patients would arrive to PACU in a hypothermic state. The nursing staff would replace the current blankets with two or three new heated blankets. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Intraoperative Normothermia Surgical Care Improvement Project (SCIP) measure, combined with the use of newer anesthetic agents, has resulted in patients arriving to PACU with normal temperatures.

### **OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT:**

The PACU nurses developed a cost reduction initiative to decrease their blanket usage while maintaining our patient's thermal comfort. The project will not only reduce the laundry waste but also impact the amount of labor for our support staff. The goal was to reduce blanket usage by 30%.

### **PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION:**

This cost reduction initiative has changed the admission process upon arrival to PACU. The group presented initial blanket usage data and laundering costs along with rationale about how to change the current practice. The group challenged the nursing staff to change their current practice based on the data provided by the following: not disposing of blankets unless soiled or per the patient's request, not disposing of blankets on the floor, and asking the patient if they are warm enough. Blanket usage data was collected both before and after staff education.

### **STATEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:**

We exceeded the goal by reaching a 50% reduction in blanket usage. Blanket usage decreased from 2.2 blankets per patient to 0.74 blankets per patients which amounts to an average savings of: \$205 per day, \$1,025 per week, \$4,440 per month, and \$53,300 annually. Our support staff's time spent emptying full linen hampers has also been saved, allowing them to focus on other tasks.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCING THE PRACTICE OF PERIANESTHESIA NURSING:**

The patient's comfort remains our priority. Heated blankets are offered if the patient is shivering, hypothermic, or requests one. Nurses are utilizing the heated blankets already provided to the patient in the operating room. Patients are still comfortable and we have not run out of blankets.