

CROSS TRAINING TO SURVIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF HEALTHCARE CHANGES

Team Leaders: Gail Davis, CNM, APRN, CNS-BC, Amy Cooper, BSN, RN
Barnes-Jewish Hospital St. Louis, Missouri
Sandra Filla, BSN, RN, CPAN

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Our institution is a Level One transplant/trauma center and performs over 140 surgeries a day. The financial impact of health care has motivated hospitals to creatively train and staff their divisions to facility the higher acuity and flow of patient volume without necessarily increasing their full time employee numbers. Our computerized documentation system is different from the rest of the hospital and does not allow for hospital staff to float in. Economic changes motivated a change in staffing structure and training.

OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT:

The PACU staff would be directed to float to areas of highest patient volume and acuity as we moved through the day. Staff would be competent to deliver care for patients in multiple phases. Patients would experience timely transition from the operating room to PACU.

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

The leadership team collaborated with the education specialist to develop a cross training orientation for all staff in all areas. Specialty education was outlined for all areas of PACU (holding, outpatient, phase I). As volume of patients allowed, nurses were oriented to areas other than their specialty. Competency checklists were completed. CNM and Lead Charge increased to an hour by hour rounding across the six divisions, reallocating staff as the flow of patient volume fluctuated. Continued monitoring throughout the day

STATEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:

The ability of maximizing manpower throughout the course of the day, and placing staff where needed for patient care hour by hour has become pivotal in providing ongoing efficient care. Most divisions assess census needs by shift needs; our approach has offered us to facilitate a lean smooth transition to care. Having nurses standing “waiting for their patient” to arrive no longer occurs. Budget is not wasted. Floating staff across our six areas translates into a stronger team work within our division.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCING THE PRACTICE OF PERIANESTHESIA NURSING:

During the current financial challenges, the optimized utilization of the resources in the PACU will allow the hospital to be financially strong, while maintaining competent staff. This expands to safe and seamless care for patients in our community.