

INTRODUCTION OF “COMFORT CARD” IN PERIOPERATIVE AREA TO IMPROVE PATIENT EXPERIENCE AND NURSING COMMUNICATION

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Background Information: In alignment with hospital strategic initiatives, the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Unit Practice Council (UPC) explored patient center care (PCC) projects that would have a positive patient impact while creating momentum for the council. After seeing a poster at the Magnet® conference and a further literature review identifying best practice from Journal of Perianesthesia Nursing (JOPAN), UPC opted to create a card that would focus on patients’ individualized concerns.

Objectives of Project: The comfort card (CC) was created to identify patient concerns and assist staff in meeting individualized patient needs.

Process of Implementation: UPC worked on card design and questions. The card included three questions:

1. “How would you prefer to be addressed?”
2. “What is your main concern postoperatively and what measures can your nurse take to ensure your comfort postoperatively?”
3. “Who is with you today and what is the best number to contact them?”

Perioperative nurses were educated on the purpose of the card. Upon admission, the preoperative nurses asked the patients the three questions and attached the card to the chart. Once in PACU, the nurses utilized the card to identify patients’ primary concerns. CC champions were established in all areas to assist with the process. The cards were collected upon PACU discharge.

Statement of Successful Practice: After one month of data collection, the UPC collaborated with anesthesia to create new initiatives to proactively address patient concerns. The top three postoperative concerns identified on the CC were as follows: pain (46%), visitation (18%), and nausea/ vomiting (10%). The initiatives included:

- Creation of “anesthesia pain and nausea rounds” in the PACU
- Improving preoperative nurse education on post-op pain expectations
- Reinforcing the need for timely visitation

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: As the focus on patient experience and patient satisfaction grows, there is an increasing need to establish PCC in perioperative areas. The use of the comfort card allowed the nurses to not only identify their patients’ greatest concerns, but helped proactively create new initiatives to address these concerns. The CC was a simple intervention, with great outcomes in patient experience improvement.