

USING SIMULATION TO BETTER PREPARE PERIANESTHESIA NURSES TO HANDLE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN THE POST ANESTHESIA CARE UNIT (PACU)

Team Leader: Patricia L. Ryan MSN MHA RN CPAN

The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Maryland

Team Members: Elena Lara BSN RN CPAN, Michelle Porter BSN RN,
Laura Kaiser BSN RN CPAN

Background Information: The Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) is a unique environment. The patients who come through the PACU are at a state in their recovery that puts them at greater risk for an emergent (airway, cardiac, stroke, shock, etc) event. Keeping the PACU staff ready to respond to these intermittent events is key to improving critically ill patient outcomes. At The Johns Hopkins Hospital, the inpatient PACU staff are trained at the same level as the surgical Intensive Care Unit (ICU) staff to be able to care for ICU patients boarding in the PACU and to handle emergent events. Keeping the PACU staff up to date and prepared for emergent situations remains key to maintaining post-operative and post procedural patient safety.

Objectives of Project:

- Provide real life experiences relating to common PACU emergency scenarios for staff in a safe learning environment.
- Use annual education and simulation to assure PACU staff are competent in their roles during a PACU emergent event.

Process of Implementation:

- PACU staff annually perform online ICU patient, Dysrhythmia, and ACLS education. While baseline scores were good, the feedback from needs assessments indicated the desire for further hands on education.
- The Perianesthesia Nursing Education Council identified and wrote scenarios for common PACU emergent events (Stroke, Respiratory Arrest, Local Anesthesia Systemic Toxicity, Malignant Hyperthermia, and Septic Shock).
- Education Council members were educated on running the SimMan 3 G simulation manikin.
- ACLS instructors from the group were designated room instructors.
- Date, times and supplies were obtained to hold simulation fairs in the inpatient PACUs.

Statement of Successful Practice:

- Fairs were interactive and provided staff with real time information.
- Staff were quick to respond to sudden changes in the patient's condition during scenarios.
- Emergency fairs were designed to replicate real life situations. The situations progressed at a realistic time frame to be as authentic as possible.
- Comparing the data from pre fair needs assessments, and post fairs survey results, staff indicated they were more comfortable translating what they learned in the fairs to their daily practice.

- Per the post fair surveys, staff identified the post scenario debriefings as most valuable in that they allowed the staff to examine both the positives interventions and areas for improvement.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:

- Emergency Scenario fairs assist staff to identify slight changes in patient condition.
- Early recognition of trends in patient condition decreases untoward outcomes by implementing the patient treatment before his or her condition becomes critical.
- Simulation in education aids in retention and comprehension of information.
- Emergency Scenario fairs better prepares the staff to initiate early intervention in an emergent situation.