

SUSTAINED VISITATION IN A BLENDED PACU

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Background Information: Evidence suggests that visitation in Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) increases nurses' communication with family, decreases patients' reported pain, decreases family member anxiety, increases patient, family and nurse satisfaction and provides an opportunity for patient and family education. Families of our patients expressed concerns about not being allowed to see their loved ones while in the PACU. Nurses in our blended PACU implemented a practice change in 2013 that increased visitation from 0% to over 85% of patients by early 2014.

Objectives of Project: To measure sustainability of the practice change 4 years following initiation of the change.

Process of Implementation: PACU visitation literature search was shared with PACU and Pre-Op nurses. Visitation guidelines and scripts were developed; nurses were educated/trained on the new processes. Visitor passes and posters were printed and distributed. The new visitation policy, which allowed one adult visitor per patient, was discussed with individuals accompanying patients for support.

Over the past four years, process improvements included clarified verbiage on the visitor pass, "gentle" scripted messages for transitioning visitors out of the PACU, visitation guidelines to the *On the Day of Surgery* booklet, visible hall signage directing visitors to the PACU, a hallway telephone to announce visitor arrivals, a PACU entry curtain, a wall mounted status board in the waiting area, and standardized EMR and discharge instructions documentation. Volunteers are present to answer phone calls and to facilitate visitation flow.

Statement of Successful Practice: Current data from ongoing random audits show a sustained visitation practice for 100% of our patients. Contact with the waiting visitors/family has improved communication and family satisfaction as measured by follow-up phone call results and mailed survey reports.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Sustained visitation practice resulted from supportive leadership, ongoing process improvement, dedicated project nurse champions and gaining PACU nurses' buy-in. This practice supports the evidence that visitation benefits patients and families.