

## **OPERATION: SHHH! REDUCING NOISE IN THE PACU**

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**Background Information:** Referenced from ASPAN Standard II Environment of Care, “perianesthesia nursing practice promotes and maintains a safe, comfortable and therapeutic environment.” At New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell, bed requests from the Ambulatory Surgery Operating Room (OR) to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) were made through phone calls. These phone calls from the OR resulted in a high volume of noise in the PACU. In July 2017, an electronic notification of bed requests called the Electronic Call Back (ECB) from the OR to the PACU was created.

**Objectives of Project:** Providing a more calming environment in the PACU through the combined efforts of the use of technology and daily quiet hours.

**Process of Implementation:** Interdisciplinary education took place for the staff in the OR and PACU. Utilizing the ECB, RNs in the OR request a PACU bed electronically, therefore reducing phone calls. Additionally, daily quiet hours were introduced to assist in our noise reduction efforts. During quiet hours, lights are dimmed and staff members speak in a quiet and calming voice. A “noise champion” is assigned daily to introduce the quiet hours.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Call volume reports measured monthly phone call volumes in the PACU. In March 2017, pre-ECB implementation there were 6,493 phone calls received. In August 2017, one month after implementation there were 3,558 received. With the implementation of our ECB, there was a 45% decrease in environmental noise, as defined by phone calls. A unit-wide survey was performed to receive feedback on modifications made on the unit. Of the 25 employees surveyed, 100% of RNs enjoy the ECB and quiet hours and all observed that patients appreciate our efforts. 92% of employees state that during quiet hours they speak softer to create a quiet and more therapeutic environment.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** Nursing research supports that a noisy and interruptive environment can alter the patient’s healing process and impair recovery. By implementing noise reduction techniques such as decreasing the frequency of phone call interruptions and quiet hours, the PACU can promote an optimal healing environment for patients recovering from surgery. Future use of technology will continue and improve our efforts further.