

## **READY, SET, BREATHE**

Team Leaders: Brian Rann BSN RN EMT-P, Colleen Cummins BSN RN CEN  
The Cleveland Clinic, Main Campus, Cleveland, Ohio  
Team Members: Joyce Bollas BSN RN, Kris Sinclair BSN RN CPAN

**Background Information:** Airway emergencies are infrequent in the PACU, but always a potential risk during the post-anesthesia period. Caring for a patient having respiratory difficulty and/or failure can be very stressful. In case of an emergency, it is important to have supplies and equipment readily available and prepared in an organized fashion. After an emergent reintubation event in the PACU, nurses discussed the need for practice to assist with becoming more efficient in these instances.

**Objectives of Project:** The goal of the Emergency Preparedness Committee was to provide opportunities for Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) nurses to practice skills and improve efficiency related to adverse airway events. This project was intended to build nursing confidence in identifying, preparing for, and participating in airway emergency interventions in the PACU.

**Process of Implementation:** In an effort to help the PACU nurses feel more comfortable in participating in airway emergencies, multiple learning and practice experiences were provided.

- PACU nurses participated in mock airway emergency scenarios which provided hands-on training:
  - to identify risk factors for airway events
  - to identify and implement appropriate interventions
- ACU nurses presented case studies at staff meetings
- Semi-annual mock codes with simulation were scheduled in PACU
- An airway cart equipment checklist was developed
- Airway cart familiarity was improved through a timed exercise

### **Statement of Successful Practice:**

- As a result of the timed exercises, knowledge and efficiency related to preparing for adverse airway events improved for PACU staff members. Nurses became more confident in their ability to prepare for and assist in the intervention of airway complications.
- Review of cases and participation in skill activities brought emergency critical thinking topics to the forefront.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** Practicing these emergent situations in a non-threatening environment can improve the nurse's efficiency, comfort level, and reduce the stress experienced by all involved. This may also contribute to improved patient outcomes.

### **References:**

- Herbers, M. D., & Heaser, J. A. (2016). Implementing an in Situ Mock Code Quality Improvement Program. *American Journal of Critical Care, 25*(5), 393-399.
- Ritt, R. M., Bennett, J., & Todd, D. (2017). Simulation Training for the Office-Based Anesthesia Team. *Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Clinics of North America.*
- Williams, K. L., Rideout, J., Pritchett-Kelly, S., McDonald, M., Mullins-Richards, P., & Dubrowski, A. (2016). Mock Code: A Code Blue Scenario Requested by and Developed for Registered Nurses. *Cureus, 8*(12).