

ENHANCING ORIENTATION PROCESS: TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

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Background Information: New-hire RNs orienting into the Pre-Operative Unit require a well-designed and structured orientation process to successfully and independently prepare patients for surgery. Three RNs are currently identified as preceptors for the Pre-Op Unit; they also share in the role of Charge Nurse. Some are part-time which decreases their availability to precept; there are days when a formal preceptor is not available. Another barrier to a streamlined process is that RNs hired for part-time or per diem positions have difficulty committing to consistent and sequential work days. Orienting only 1-2 days/week created lengthy orientation periods where knowledge retention was compromised and evaluation of progress was difficult. Lengthy orientation times for part-time and per diem new hires and difficulty assessing readiness for coming off orientation was frustrating for current employees and charge nurses. Determining and evaluating readiness for practicing independently, due to fragmented scheduling, was challenging and lead to an inefficient orientation process.

Objectives of Project:

- Develop a process for tracking progress of new hires
- Create a standardized orientation process that is adaptable to the Full time, Part time or Per Diem new hire RN

Process of Implementation: Initial step included brainstorming with the manager, educator, charge nurses, and preceptors to look at the entire orientation process from general orientation through clinical orientation. A formal Orientation Flowsheet was created and revised after receiving feedback. An Orientation Resource Binder was developed including surgeon-specific reference cards, standardized procedures, and components of the ASPAN Orientation Program. A designated place was established for orientation paperwork. The initial interview process was revised to specify requirements for clinical orientation; a minimum of 2-3 days/week was implemented.

Statement of Successful Practice:

- A standardized process exists to guide new hire orientation
- An Orientation Flowsheet is utilized as a guide to track orientation progress
- Progress can be evaluated and modified specific to the needs of the new hire

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: A standardized approach to orientation, complete with schedule, flowsheet, and comprehensive orientation checklist, allows both preceptor and new hire nurse, whether full-time, part-time, or per diem, a path through the orientation process and aids in evaluating readiness for independent practice.