

Background

- **Bayhealth Medical Center** in Delaware employs more than 4,000 employees and has a medical staff of more than 400 physicians.
- Bayhealth had to implement a process that ensured **safe care of patients and a redeployment plan for staff** that resulted in protection for everyone during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The leadership team **evaluated our resources** and devised a plan for appropriately educating and placing staff in the areas best suited to their background and skills.



Objectives

- **Increase frontline staff** caring for Covid patients
- **Assess** staffing resources available
- **Educate** Perioperative staff to assist with patient care and appropriate documentation.
- Educate Perioperative nurses to care for and **discharge overnight patients** within their own units
- Devise a **redemption plan** for all staff

Staff Comments

- “Every day that I was redeployed someone thanked me. I felt as though I was providing some relief for an already exhausted ICU staff.”
- “This is the most memorable time of my nursing career. I am closer now than I have ever been with some of my peers.”

Implementation

1. Perioperative Redeployment Plan Elective Surgeries on Hold

- **Core group** of perioperative staff remained on unit to care for urgent/emergent cases
- Created **skills inventory list**, match skill set with recent background and comfort level
- **Work schedules** were matched as close as possible to prior schedules.
- **Online education** modules completed for inpatient documentation
- **Documentation training** from Periop staff with recent floor experience

Periop Staff Filled Variety of Roles

- **Full** patient assignments
- **Partial** patient assignments
- Administered **medications**
- **Titrated** medical drips
- Personal care/ **baths**
- Assisted **proning** patients
- One to one **sitters**
- **Communication techs**, pivotal in patient/family communication
- Covid Management team: **telephone resource** center for questions r/t covid exposures/quarantine, scheduled testing, and tracking symptoms of positive patients
- **Collaborated** with multidisciplinary staff to recognize patient decline and advocate for **family bonding** time



2. Discharging Overnight Pts Elective Surgeries Resumed

- **Minimal In-patient beds** available, **2nd Covid** surge occurred
- Perioperative staff provided **24 hour boarder care** for inpatients without bed assignments
- **Overcame inpatient documentation** and discharge challenges with mentor training
- **Boarders** for PACU were present **5-7 days a week** for several months
- **Boarders** for Day Surgery were present **2-3 times weekly** for several months
- **Increased** on call to **24 hour coverage** in Day Surgery for boarders
- **Staffing incentives**, rewards and recognitions offered
- **Collaboration** with physical therapy to discharge total joint patients
- **Patient comfort measures** provided
ipads and music therapy offered
closed door rooms when possible
encouraged remote family communication

Lessons Learned

- All staff members have value and individual skills that are able to be used in some capacity during a pandemic. Creating a **skills inventory list** is essential.
- When redeploying staff, **match skill set** as close as possible with required tasks. Every employee is different with **unique attributes**.
- **Frontline staff** caring for the most critical patients must be supported with as many helping hands and **additional staff** as possible.
- Employees **seek clarity** of role and responsibilities during the transition. Identify their specific duties before assignment.
- Assess for **staff stressors** and **minimize** as many as possible.
- Deployed staff should be **supported emotionally** with leadership open door policy to discuss daily challenges; helpful in avoiding PTSD.
- Schedule changes should be given with as much **advanced notice** as possible.
- **Leadership support**, rounding is essential.



Successful Practices

- Improved **patient care** and **outcomes** by providing help to frontline staff
- Improved **documentation skills** for perioperative staff, now able to care for in patient population
- **Mutual respect** between staff and leadership
- **Cross training** between pacu and day surgery
- Improved **disaster preparedness**