Addressing Colleague Safety in the PACU

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Background Information: Hospital workers have seen an increase in hospital violence over the past several years. 2019 data showed one in five health care professionals experienced workplace physical violence perpetrated by patient or visitors worldwide annually (Li. et al). There have been several incidents with unruly visitors and an increase seen in incivility of patients and colleagues in our institution. This has led to a concern by PACU staff for their safety.

Objectives of Project: Provide the PACU staff with the tools they need to feel confident in addressing their own safety. Implement strategies to reduce the incidence of violence in the PACU.

Process of Implementation:
- Completed a PACU assessment to identify areas of opportunity
- Reviewed safety features when on call in department
- Restrict non-essential persons cutting through the PACU to access OR
- Added Security's phone number in all RN cell phones
- Engaged hospital security to provide guidance in violence abatement
- Facilitated security led classes on reducing crisis situations
- Installed three panic buttons throughout the unit that brings security staff immediately
- Placement of camera at PACU doors to screen persons requesting entry

Statement of Successful Practice: Staff self-report that they are aware of these new tools to enhance colleague safety. The nurses are grateful for the implementation of the safety practices that provide them with the confidence for their own safety.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Post anesthesia nurses deserve to feel safe in their practice. Implementing resources to address workplace violence allows the PACU nurse to feel safe while providing excellent patient care.