

Nursing Best Practice: Safe Use, Storage, and Disposal of Opioid Medications & the Critical Contribution of Perianesthesia Nurses

Team Leaders: Agnes Hsu BSN RN CPAN, Felicia G. Selman MSN RN CAPA
The University of Texas at MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, Texas
Team Members: Soo L Ok MSN CPAN, Mary Ann Del Rosario MSN RN CAPA,
Maria Lourdes De Leon Marin RN CCRN, Jeyakumar Venkatesan RN CAPA,
Yvette Rosenthal RN CAPA, Adrienne Ogbevire MSN RN

Background Information: Opioid related overdoses and deaths are serious public health problems in the United States. The Perianesthesia nurse's roles as advocates and educators are uniquely positioned to ensure proper storage and disposal of controlled substances at every patient encounter.

Objectives of Project: Increase the use of the Prescription Medicine Safe Storage and Disposal during discharge teaching and providing the resource to patients as a standard practice to promote awareness.

Process of Implementation: Nurses were educated on patient education material on "Opioid Therapy After Surgery" and "Prescription Medicine Safe Storage and Disposal". Easy quick access link was created and made available in the "My smart phrase" electronic documentation. It also provides information on directions and drop off locations for unused controlled substances in the institution and community.

Statement of Successful Practice: 41 nurses in primary care roles surveyed before and after education provided.

How often do you discuss opioid therapy risks, side effects and realistic benefits of treatment with patient/caregivers, from 56 to 75%. How often education on the use, storage, and disposal of opioid medications is provided, from 29 to 72%. How often do you discuss the use of nonpharmacologic or non-opioid alternative therapy, from 52 to 60%. How often the potential risk of tolerance or opioid use disorder is mentioned, from 26 to 48%. Do you provide patients/caregivers with the following education handout- "Opioid Therapy After Surgery" and "Prescription Medicine Safe Storage and Disposal", from 21 to 72%.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Standardized patient discharge education, nurses' knowledge and practices are the key to success in promote awareness of safe use, storage, and disposal of opioids to patient/caregivers in the ambulatory surgery setting.