PACU Nursing Education of Outpatient Staff

**Purpose:** Due to increased patient acuity Barnes-Jewish Hospital (BJH) PACU staff implemented a nursing education program to provide Outpatient (OP) staff ongoing and advancement in education. This was necessary to increase staff comfort in caring for high acuity patients. OP nurses’ peers assist in the educational process thus promoting a collegial environment.

**Description:** Weekly power-point didactic sessions are scheduled on various topics along with skills education with RN’s from phase one PACU. OP staff spend time in the preoperative and phase one areas working with nurses to complete skills checklist observation and reinforce ongoing competencies. In addition, they shadow the Regional Anesthesia nurse and a member of cardiothoracic anesthesia. Highlighted scenario education topics include hypotension and hypertension management, EKG changes, respiratory and cardiac arrest, neurological status changes, PA catheter, and blood transfusions. Skills competencies include arterial line insertion, chest tube insertion, intubation, regional anesthesia, hybrid process, and central line insertion.

**Evaluation/Outcome:** The OP staff complete surveys regarding education sessions and show overwhelming support for the program and state increased satisfaction. It has promoted a collegial environment among staff from the different areas of the PACU. Nurses verbalize they enjoy the non threatening learning sessions with their peers.