Development of a Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Renal Transplant Program
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Our PACU has successfully cared for designated donor renal transplants. In 2007, the institution prioritized expansion of the program to include the care of deceased donor transplants. The goal was to bypass the ICU, recover in the PACU and transfer to the floor. We needed to expand the knowledge base and increase the number of nurses proficient in the complex care of renal transplant patients on all shifts. An added challenge was that the opportunity to care for deceased donor recipients was limited and unpredictable.

A competency based education plan for the nursing team comprised several phases. PACU nurses were identified based on previous experience and clinical strengths. The first phase included a day-long class with speakers from the hospital kidney transplant program and the organ procurement bank, a presentation detailing postoperative care in the PACU and hands-on case simulation training. The second phase paired the proficient RN with the RN orienting, allowing focus on two distinct roles: documentation and direct patient care. The final phase encompasses an electronic documentation competency module. Ongoing educational offerings continue to be provided. Program effectiveness was evaluated and has been overwhelmingly positive. Our efforts enabled us to ensure excellent care to this patient population.