Title: Optimizing Patient Throughput: PACU to Inpatient Unit Transfer Process

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Background/Problem: Promoting patient throughput during hospitalization is an important initiative as healthcare providers have been challenged with improving efficiencies and minimizing costs while preserving safe, high quality patient care.

Objective: Optimize patient throughput from PACU to inpatient units. Improve healthcare team communication, patient safety, and patient/nurse satisfaction with the PACU to inpatient unit transfer process.

Process of implementation: Leadership nurses developed a collaborative workgroup to support throughput initiatives for PACU to inpatient unit transfers. Monthly meetings are well attended with representation from Perioperative and Surgical Programs.

Successful practice: Administered survey to capture baseline data on RN satisfaction level related to various components of the PACU transfer process, implemented a PACU and inpatient unit shadow exchange program to promote greater teamwork and appreciation for each area’s unique workflow, developed an evidence based report tool to standardize the PACU report process, and disseminated a quarterly newsletter, “The Revolving Door” to keep staff informed of ongoing throughput initiatives.

Implications for advancing the practice of perianesthesia nursing: A collaborative workgroup helps to promote teamwork among Surgical and Perioperative Programs that supports the development of leadership skills, and facilitates improved patient outcomes and increased patient/nurse satisfaction with the PACU to inpatient unit transfer process.