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Abstract  
Family Visitation In The PACU: It Works!

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Problem

The PACU needed a visitation policy to meet the needs of the families, patients and hospital staff. Lack of consistency and clarity among surgeons and staff regarding the timing, frequency and length of the visits was problematic. Families were unhappy.

Objective

To develop a PACU visitation policy that would promote a positive perianesthesia experience, supports Georgetown’s mission of “Cura Personalis”, caring for the whole person, while maintaining the safety and confidentiality of all patients.

Implementation Process

We developed a visitation task force to gain insight from the staff, patients and families through a survey. Data was compiled from various hospitals regarding their policy or lack thereof. Training sessions enabled the staff to effectively communicate visitation rules to the patients and their families.

Statement of Successful Practice

A definitive policy was established and executed August 2009.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing

PACU visitation supports the mission of “Cura Personalis”. Sometimes all it takes is one visit to change fear and worry to faith and hope. An all-inclusive policy can unite the family and staff, creating an atmosphere of trust and confidence. The new policy was executed and in a word, the results were “amazing”.

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