Establishing Documentation Standards

**Purpose:** Keeping up with the all the regulatory guidelines related to nursing documentation can be difficult. Also when switching from a pen and paper documentation to computerized nursing documentation in a PACU it is important to understand and know what staff nurses are expected to document.

**Description:** With switching from paper to computerized documentation there needed to be changes to documentation to meet standards and regulatory guidelines. Also the PACU performs chart audits and it was evident that there was need for education regarding documentation expectations. PACU leadership realized that standards existed for care, admission and processes, but there none were written standards for documentation. The team reviewed ASPAN and The Joint Commission Guidelines on nursing documentation. The computerized system was built to meet these. The current paper documentation form was missing some of those “must” components of documentation. Once reviewed a draft of the PACU Documentation Standards was typed. The PACU PI team reviewed and approved them.

**Evaluation and Outcomes:** A staff nurse in the PACU performed individual education on the standards. The staff nurses signed off on the education. Having documentation standards has made the transition smoother and assisted in keeping up with the right pieces of documentation.