Families of our patients expressed concerns about not having status updates and not being allowed to see their loved ones while in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).

The “No visitation” policy in our PACU resulted in decreased patient and family members’ satisfaction.

Evidence suggests that visitation in PACU:
- Increases nurses’ communication with family
- Decreases patients’ report of pain
- Decreases family members’ anxiety
- Increases patient, family and nurses’ satisfaction
- Provides opportunities for patient and family education

(Lee. 2015, Carter 2012, DeWitt 2010)

Given the benefits of visitation in the PACU, Practice Recommendation 9 supports visitation in the PACU of our Magnet designated community hospital.

Nurses in our blended PACU implemented a practice change that increased visitation from 0% at baseline (early 2013) to 86.8% by end of 2013.

Our data from ongoing random audits conducted in 2014 through 2017 show a sustained visitation practice that increased up to 100% of our patients (Figure 1).

Contact with the waiting room visitors/family has improved communication and family satisfaction as measured by follow-up phone calls and mailed surveys.

Visitor complaints regarding PACU patient stratus were eliminated.

Special appreciation goes to Dr. Sadeeka Al-Majid, PhD, RN for her continued guidance and support.

Statement of Successful Practice

Nurses in our blended PACU implemented a practice change that increased visitation from 0% at baseline (early 2013) to 86.8% by end of 2013.

Our data from ongoing random audits conducted in 2014 through 2017 show a sustained visitation practice that increased up to 100% of our patients (Figure 1).

Contact with the waiting room visitors/family has improved communication and family satisfaction as measured by follow-up phone calls and mailed surveys.

Visitor complaints regarding PACU patient stratus were eliminated.

Implications for Practice

Sustained visitation practice resulted from:
- Supportive leadership
- Ongoing process improvement,
- Dedicated project nurse team
- Enthusiastic PACU staff nurses.

Our data support the evidence that visitation benefits patients and families.

Assessment of therapeutic benefits of visitation is warranted.

Acknowledgement

Special appreciation goes to Dr. Sadeeka Al-Majid, PhD, RN for her continued guidance and support.