

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO PRE-OPERATIVE REGIONAL ANESTHESIA

Team Leader: Sarah Boso, BSN, RN, CCRN

WVU Healthcare, Morgantown, WV

Team Members: Rachel Pickrell, BSN, RN, CPAN; Shirley Zupper, RN; Joanna Snyder, RN

Patients receiving pre-operative regional anesthesia were experiencing gaps in the continuum of care. These gaps were directly related to the lack of an assigned nurse resulting in delay of cases and missed opportunities for nerve blocks due to chaotic care flow and nurses lacking the tools to identify potential patients. It was difficult for anesthesia to secure a nurse to assist with the block and for the nurse to focus on the procedure while leaving her other patients. Surgeons were hesitant to use regional anesthesia for fear of delays.

Our objective was to designate one “Block Nurse” to assist with regional anesthesia to ensure an organized process allowing all potential candidates the benefit of regional anesthesia.

A group of designated “Block Nurses” were given an extensive four day training program on regional anesthesia coordinated by the pain management nurse clinician. This empowered the perianesthesia nurses to identify potential candidates, ensure on-time starts with planned scheduling, provide patients and families education on regional anesthesia, and establish a cohesive approach between surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses, and patients toward regional anesthesia.

Our successful practice of designating, educating and implementing a “Block Nurse” Program has empowered perianesthesia nurses to advocate for their patient’s needs, work cohesively with the physicians to provide timely and safe regional anesthesia, while increasing patient and practitioner satisfaction.

Educating and empowering perianesthesia nurses are crucial in furthering perianesthesia nursing. This program gives nurses the tools to streamline the regional anesthesia process, identify potential patients, and increase patient, nurse and physician satisfaction.