

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION AND PATIENT COMFORT WHEN STAY IS EXTENDED IN PACU

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Background Information related to the problem identification:

Wait time for inpatient beds for PACU patients can cause decrease productivity and patient satisfaction. The Operating Room is affected as patient flow comes to a halt. PACU staff experience frustration and confusion related to staffing ratios.

Objectives of project:

- Identify strategies to improve efficiencies and productivity
- Educate staff regarding findings from literature and standards
- Implement a process for successful care of the patient with extended stay in PACU

Process of Implementation:

Nurses discussed the best location in PACU for extended stay patients. Standards for discharge ready patients were reviewed and accepted as best practice. Documentation was discussed, including assessment frequency and medical coverage of ready patients. Anesthesia agreed to continue to cover ready patients to provide easy access to patient orders. The SBAR Handoff Tool was revised to reflect appropriate report information.

Statement of the successful practice:

The PACU Extended Observation nurse includes family for unlimited visitation which is a patient and family satisfier. Comfort measure including, clear fluids and pain medications are continued as patient care remains centered. Continuity of care is clear as inpatient orders for medications and lab work are executed without delays. Duplications are eliminated as documentation is clearer on the revised SBAR Handoff Tool.

Implications:

PeriAnesthesia nurses are more relaxed as extended care is in focus for our patients. There are no questions related to what should be done when, as nurses provide ongoing continuity of care. Standardizing this practice unites the department for a Best Practice Initiative.