

## **GENERATION Z: CARE OF ADOLESCENTS IN THE ADULT PACU**

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The physical layout and size of this institution allows for separate Pediatric and Adult PACUs. In many instances, however, adolescent patients may be cared for by surgeons and anesthesia providers from “adult” service lines based on specific disease processes, and ultimately are transferred to the Adult PACU for care. Although many adolescents are physically the size of adult patients, they have unique needs. Nurses in Adult PACU area reported low levels of confidence in meeting this patient population’s needs.

The objective was to increase staff confidence in the care they provide to adolescent patients in Adult PACU.

A computerized online module was created for the nurses. This educational module reviewed stages of development, fears, hospitalization, postoperative management, and anesthesia-related problems. A post-test was implemented to assess nursing competence. The module was submitted for continuing education credit.

More resources have been provided for the PACU staff nurses. This information is based in current, best practices which allow PACU nurses to feel confident in the quality of care that they deliver to adolescents. This then allows the nursing staff to feel competent and qualified to deliver quality patient care to the adolescent patient.

The nurses now report feeling comfortable as they transition between caring for adult and adolescent patients. The online module has empowered the nurse with the resources and appropriate information to deliver world class care to the adolescent population. Educational technology can be an effective tool for the perianesthesia nurse learning to care for diverse patient populations.