

## **THE CPAN CAPA CERTIFICATION JOURNEY**

Team Leaders: Maggie Colabuono, RN, BSN, CPAN, CAPA; Debbie Bennett-Carey, RN, MSN  
Advocate Christ Medical Center and Hope Children's Hospital, Oak Lawn, Illinois  
Team Member: Jackie Murauski, RN, MSN, ANP, CNS, CCRN, CPAN

In 2010, Advocate Christ Medical Center and Hope Children's Hospital (ACMC), in Oak Lawn, Illinois embarked on a journey to promote nursing certification. The growth of certification is essential to one of the focuses of Magnet designation. Numerous studies have identified the value of certification with a higher quality care and better patient outcomes. However, it was identified that the ACMC perioperative nurses lacked formal preparation for the CPAN/CAPA exams. With the testing window only available two times of the year, it was vital for a program to be developed to adequately prepare and assist the nurses.

The objectives of this project were:

- 1) Identify the value of CPAN/CAPA certification in order to encourage perioperative nurses to sit for the appropriate certification exam
- 2) Provide resources/education using a comprehensive approach
- 3) Encourage mentorship by the current certified CAPA/CPAN nurses

Numerous educational processes were developed to promote certification. Administrative support was crucial to this undertaking by providing recognition and financial support. Our initial review of certified nurse's showed 17%. After implementation, there has been a statistically significant increase in certification attempts/successes.

While RN licensure is mandatory, nursing specialty certification is a voluntary process. CPAN/CAPA certification illustrates a mastery of knowledge and skills that defines perioperative specialization. Patients, physicians, health care providers, insurers, and quality organizations regard certification as an important measure of a nurse's knowledge, experience and skills to provide quality health care within a given specialty.