

UTILIZATION OF THE NURSE LIAISON ROLE TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION IN THE PERIOPERATIVE SETTING

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Background

A knowledgeable professional's presence was lacking in the perioperative waiting room. The identified problem was increased anxiety of patients and families due to unanswered questions, misinformation, and the appearance of a general lack of caring. An electronic status board allowed families to track their loved ones progress through the perioperative period but personal contact was missing.

Objectives

Reduce the anxiety and increase satisfaction of patients and families during the perioperative process by providing knowledgeable professionals to offer care and facilitate communication.

Process

Success of the Nurse Liaison program required the nurses to be knowledgeable of perioperative process. Therefore, pre-post, endoscopy, and operating room nurses were considered for the assignment. A team of two core and five resource nurses was selected. In preparation for this role, the nurses attended classes on communication, customer service and crisis prevention.

The Nurse Liaison is strategically placed to greet arriving patients. The patients and families are greeted by name and instructed on the electronic status board. The family is given the name and phone number for reaching the Nurse Liaison. The Nurse Liaison maintains contact with each of the perioperative areas regarding changes in the OR schedule allowing for personal communication of delays, family consultation with the surgeon, and service recovery if necessary. The Nurse Liaison passes family care to the charge nurse when leaving.

Benefits

In advancing Perianesthesia Nursing the human element remains imperative in communication. The Nurse Liaison provides emotional support, through effective communication, to patients and families during stressful life events.