

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERIOPERATIVE
COMMITTEE DEDICATED TO THE CARE OF PEDIATRIC PATIENTS ON THE
SPECTRUM OF AUTISM**

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Autism is associated with significant co-morbidities. A great need was identified for all disciplines within the perioperative program at Boston Children's Hospital to work together to individualize the autistic patient's perioperative experience, by partnering with the parents to ensure that all their child's unique and individualized needs are met.

The purpose of this committee was to form a partnership with other disciplines of the perioperative staff and the parents of autistic patients in order to facilitate an optimal and well managed perioperative experience for the patient and their family.

Nurses from each perioperative area collaborated with anesthesiologists and child life specialists to create a perioperative plan of care for the autistic patient. A preoperative questionnaire was developed to gather specific information from parents as to how to best care for their child on the day of surgery. This individualized patient care information is circulated amongst the multiple disciplines within the perioperative area.

Perioperative nurses have become more sensitive to and better prepared for caring for autistic patients. Adverse outcomes have been prevented in this special patient population by tailoring their care and anesthetic approach. Parents and patients feel empowered by being part of the plan of care.

BCH is a Magnet designated facility where nurses are encouraged to improve processes that increase patient/family satisfaction and optimize patient outcomes. Nurses are empowered by leadership to identify opportunities to advance care and are encouraged to undertake a multidisciplinary approach.