

IMPROVING PATIENT AND FAMILY SATISFACTION BY ADDRESSING PACU VISITATION AND EDUCATION

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BACKGROUND:

Historically, the peri-anesthesia care unit (PACU) has been a restricted area, which has not allowed for family visitation, even though literature suggests it is beneficial for patients and family. Our institution is a level one trauma center and performs over 100 surgeries per day. Challenges to visitation include: privacy, space, and lack of knowledge or education on the part of the family regarding what to expect in a visit. Currently, two visitors are escorted to the PACU for a five minute postoperative visit with their loved one. This occurs one hour after patient arrival to Phase I and hourly after that. Families lacked understanding of the process, felt rushed, and did not know what to expect. Nurses felt frustration due to lack of time to answer questions and provide teaching.

OBJECTIVES:

PACU staff would revise current visitation guidelines to provide a more stream-lined process, while considering the need for patient-centered care. Families of patients will have education to better utilize the visitation period.

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

A Kiazen took place to understand the current process, communication, and flow of family visitation in all areas of the PACU. The Kiazen team members included staff from pre/post, registration, surgical waiting room, managers, and the director. Next, a family visitation committee (FVC) was formed to discuss issues and examine the needs, including the process of visitation along with the educational needs of the families and visitors. The new process includes a visit after patient has been in recovery for 90 minutes and increasing visitation to 15 minutes. An informational pamphlet was created to describe the visitation process, and to provide education on several topics to increase visitor knowledge base prior to arrival.

STATEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:

Visitors have voiced an improvement in the process, noting that it appears more organized and less rushed. Nurses appreciate having more time to settle the patient in prior to the visit and the increase in time to interact with visitors.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCING THE PRACTICE OF PERIANESTHESIA NURSING:

Increased satisfaction for the patient, family, and staff in the peri-operative arena contribute to better patient experiences.