

## **CONNECTING THE DOTS: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NOVICE PACU NURSES**

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### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

During nursing orientation in PACU, nurses are provided an extensive orientation with weekly goals and unit based objectives. However, direct observation of these nurses (RN's ranging from novice to expert) indicated disconnect between nursing theory and clinical practice. An orientation process survey was provided to 15 nurses in PACU to assess the efficiency of orientation and to identify additional learning needs. The survey and direct clinical orientation of new hires identified a need for further education to alleviate disconnect in the "how" and "why". "Connecting the Dots" (a one day course focused on caring for the post anesthesia patient) was developed to aggregate PACU nurses orientation, theory, and clinical knowledge.

### **OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT:**

The purpose was to improve the orientation process for an inexperienced PACU nurse through a one day course that focused on PACU based didactic and skill session.

### **PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION:**

Based on the new employee orientation needs assessment, and direct clinical observation of the new PACU nurses; we developed "Connecting the Dots" one day program. The program focused on didactic and skill validation required caring for high acuity patients in the PACU including ventilator management, flap assessment, hemodynamic monitoring, malignant hyperthermia, and recovery scores. Formative and summative assessments were done to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Post Assessment results indicate a 20% increase in assessment and nursing interventions based on course content.

### **STATEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:**

Implementation of "Connecting the Dots" a program for novice PACU nurses to aggregate and "connect" both clinical and theoretical nursing will assist in decreasing knowledge deficits and enhance professional development.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCING THE PRACTICE OF PERIANESTHESIA NURSING:**

This project improved the professional development of novice PACU nurses and standard of care for patients in the high acuity post-operative recovery period.