

GRADUATE NURSE TO PACU NURSE RESIDENT: DEVELOPING AN IN-DEPTH ORIENTATION FOR THE GRADUATE NURSE

Team Leader: Natalie Ray, BSN, RN

West Virginia University Hospital Morgantown, West Virginia

Team Members: Shirley Zupper, BSN, RN, Michael Lincoln, BSN, RN, Joanna Snyder, RN

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Historically, the PACU has been a unit that nurses would gravitate to after years of providing ICU nursing care. Recent trends show that nurses are now leaving the ICU setting and continuing their education into master based programs. We have seen this same trend in the PACU. There is an increasing number of Graduate Nurses expressing an interest in the PACU, but have been turned away from working in the PACU until they obtain critical care experience. We have limited ourselves from obtaining high quality candidates by not considering to hire and train Graduate Nurses.

OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT:

Develop methods to successfully hire, orient, and retain Graduate Nurses in the PACU.

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

Our PACU frequently hires junior and senior year nursing students as Perioperative Care Assistants (PCA). The top performing PCAs frequently seek employment in critical care areas following graduation. The PACU wanted to be able to benefit from these staff members by retaining them in the PACU as Graduate Nurses. We developed a nine-month PACU Nurse Residency program. This program includes: extended orientation to all phases of care in the PACU, share experiences with departments that the PACU frequently receives and sends patients to, ICU, PICU, Interventional Radiology. Also included in this program are monthly education lectures developed from Perianesthesia Nursing Core Curriculum and Drain's PeriAnesthesia Nursing: A Critical Care Approach.

STATEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE:

The PACU has been able to successfully hire, orient and retain a graduate nurse. She has completed orientation in all phases of the PACU, observed and trained in other departments throughout our facility and continues to receive education focused on caring for the PACU patient.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCING THE PRACTICE OF PERIANESTHESIA NURSING:

The program that has been developed can be used for future graduate nurses and can be tailored to provide experienced nurses, with no PACU experience, an in-depth orientation to develop them into highly trained PACU nurses. We can successfully develop a graduate nurse into a nurse with a strong knowledge base, excellent assessment skills, and the ability to provide excellent bedside care in a fast paced environment.