

## **WHEN THE SCREEN WENT BLACK: LESSONS LEARNED FROM FIVE DAYS OF DOWNTIME**

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**Background Information:** In the present world of electronics and paperless medical records (EMRs), what are the implications for patient safety when that system is interrupted? During "downtime", the electronic system for computer documentation and communication is inaccessible and requires modifications to routine workflow as well as communication between staff, patients, and families. In the aftermath of a prolonged down time experience which occurred spring 2015, the need to revise documentation, clarify communication methods, and further educate staff when confronted by limited resources was evident.

**Objectives of Project:** Develop and implement an improved downtime process for utilization during an extended period of time when unable to access the EMR and electronic communication.

### **Process of Implementation:**

- Analyzed the previous process for downtime
- Identified areas for improvement
- Obtained feedback from perioperative team
- Revised PAEF (Pre Anesthetic Evaluation Form) for downtime perioperative period
- Implemented staff education
- Initiated yearly competency assessment

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Effective communication, documentation and perioperative workflow will be maintained during unplanned electronic interruptions to ensure patient safety and positive outcomes.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** As the perioperative healthcare landscape continues to shift, perianesthesia nurses are key leaders to advocate the need for coordinated care and enable better data infrastructure. The role of the perianesthesia nurse and the EMR will most certainly be integral to the industry's future. The goal of the nurses in collaboration with the perioperative team is that the standard of patient care for clinical documentation and patient care orders be maintained during computer downtime and recovered when the system is restored.