

ESSENTIAL ROLE OF PACU NURSING IN DEVELOPING AND SUSTAINING A MULTIDISCIPLINARY ENHANCED RECOVERY PROGRAM

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Background Information: A perioperative nursing team at a national cancer organization caring for patients on Enhanced Recovery Pathway (ERP), identified gaps in nursing knowledge and perception related to the philosophy and concepts of ERP patient populations. The concept of ERP was introduced to our nursing team as multidisciplinary pathways that integrate evidence-based interventions in each aspect of perioperative phases to decrease surgical stress response, enhance recovery, decrease length of stay and improve outcomes. The concept of ERP required a shift in the paradigm of traditional nursing care for veteran PACU nurses.

Objectives of Project:

- Define Enhanced Recovery Pathway
- Describe theory and application advantages of ERP
- Evaluate and improve nursing perception and understanding of ERP
- Enhance nursing knowledge related to multiple ERPs utilized at a leading cancer organization
- Improve application of ERP components in the PACU setting

Process of Implementation: Knowledge deficit of nursing colleagues was assessed through a nursing survey of perioperative nurses. The survey identified gaps in knowledge related to ERP philosophy, protocols, medications and nursing perceptions. Pre-survey results indicated 63% of the nurses perceived ERP patients to have moderate to severe pain post operatively. Post education survey indicated 81% of the nurses perceived ERP protocol patient's pain to be well controlled or mild pain. Extensive education was provided by a nurse driven multidisciplinary team, which included monthly in-services and rounding to provide one to one support. Development of a resource binder by expert nurses from the ERP team to assist nursing colleagues with quick references aided in nurse compliance and understanding of ERP.

Statement of Successful Practice: Collaborating with a nurse driven multidisciplinary team to provide evidence based education related to ERP can improve nursing understanding and compliance with ERP protocols. Sustainability of the ERP program will be assessed and monitored monthly by a nurse driven ERP team.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Development of nurse driven multidisciplinary teams to identify gaps in knowledge, and provide expert education can improve nursing perceptions and improve compliance with Enhanced Recovery Pathways.