

## **BRIDGING THE GAP: THE ROLE OF THE NURSE NAVIGATOR IN THE PERIOPERATIVE SETTING**

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**Background Information:** Patient and family dissatisfaction and opportunities for improvement were observed by staff and management. Press Ganey scores were below the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile. We needed to improve the scores and achieve our departmental goal of being above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.

**Objectives of Project:** The vision of was to create a full time member of the nursing staff whose role was to “bridge the gap” of communication as patients move along the continuum within the perioperative setting. We wanted to achieve the goal of improving patient satisfaction scores and enhancing both patient and family experience.

**Process of Implementation:** The implementation of the Nurse Navigator began in 2012. Duties of this role include, but are not limited to, analyzing patient satisfaction scores daily and reporting to management. Satisfaction surveys were all reviewed and patients were contacted to follow up regarding any concerns. The Nurse Navigator enabled patient and family to have a safe environment for feedback regarding their experience. Processes for improvement were identified and implemented. The role also focused on improving collaboration with physicians. We identified those who were not effectively communicating with the family. The Nurse Navigator is now a full time position staffed by a dedicated Registered Nurse who has access to all perioperative areas. She helps patients and their families through the process from start to finish.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Patient satisfaction scores have been increasing since 2012 when the role was implemented. The Press Ganey scores have risen 5%. Patients have returned to Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare and speak highly of the care and compassion they received and have been recommending the hospital to others. The nursing staff is proud of the care we provide to the community.

**Implementation for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** The Nurse Navigator has helped to improve patient satisfaction as reflected in increased satisfaction scores and the self-reporting of patient and family experience.