

NEW GRADUATES IN THE PACU: BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST THROUGH A RESIDENCY PROGRAM

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Background Information: In the past the PACU has only hired experienced critical nurses. Attempts to train new graduates have not succeeded in the retainment of nurses past one year. Historically it has been found that a residency program for new graduates has increased retention.

Objectives of Project: Develop an educational program which enhances the new graduates' knowledge base in such a way that they feel competent in their decisions and will have a foundation of evidence based practice (EBP) for them to build upon as they develop their critical thinking skills. To build trust between the experienced nurse and the new graduate so that they will have a positive experience on the unit.

Process of Implementation: Development of a PACU residency program with an educational plan that includes the ASPAN Competency Based Orientation and Credentialing resource, speaker presentations, incorporation of an EBP project, and adjunct opportunities with a Certified Nurse Anesthetist, Respiratory Therapist, Nurse Practitioner, and in a cadaver lab.

Statement of Successful Practice: Pre and post evaluations have shown an increase in the knowledge base and confidence of the new graduate. Overall evaluations have been positive for the program. Residents have increased their knowledge on how to use the library databases and search for evidence, and have completed and presented EBP literature searches to other staff members through oral and/or poster presentations. Feedback continues to assist in enhancing the program further. After completion of the program experienced nurses have found the residents to be competent in their role and are more supportive of accepting new graduates into their area.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Resident programs have been found to enhance new graduates competence and retention. Building on the new graduates knowledge of EBP and its use within the facility will give them confidence to continue in its utilization in their practice and assist in the development of critical thinking skills. Utilization of similar programs can prepare a new graduate for a PACU experience and instill confidence and support of the unit.