

CAPA CERTIFIED NURSES TO THE RESCUE: RAPID RESPONSE IN THE OUTPATIENT SETTING

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Background Information Related to Problem Identification: In 2005, an ambulatory care building was opened in order to provide diagnostic, oncologic, radiological and surgical procedures. The nursing administration wanted to provide the same services offered to our outpatient customers (patients, workforce members and visitors) as our inpatient customers. In response to, "The 100, 000 Lives Campaign", a rapid response team was created for the outpatient setting and it was named the Medical Emergency Rapid Intervention Team (MERIT). From 2005 to 2012, inpatient Post Anesthesia Care nurses were staffed as MERIT. In 2012, the outpatient Post Anesthesia Care nurses began to staff the MERIT team.

Objectives of Project: To develop a teaching plan in order to train outpatient CAPA certified nurses to handle urgent and emergent situations as a rapid response nurse in an ambulatory setting.

Process of Implementation:

- Identify nurses who could work as autonomous critical thinkers.
- Develop an educational plan to augment a Post Anesthesia Care nurses' knowledge base and skillset.
- Educate current Ambulatory Surgery Center nurses on MERIT processes.

Statement of the Successful Practice: The outpatient MERIT Team has cared for more than 450 customers since 2012. Working closely with the primary clinic caregivers, the Code Blue Team, and Case Management, we have a solid, but flexible plan in place for our customers. Patients can be discharged in their own care, allowed to follow-up with their primary practitioner or be transferred to a higher level of care.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: In our clinics and outpatient treatment facilities, patients are experiencing severe drug reactions, chest pain, falls, altered mental status, sepsis and, at times, seizure activity. CAPA certified Post Anesthesia Care nurses are autonomous, critical thinkers and excellent patient educators. Our assessment skills are put to good use during emergencies. The focused assessment and on the spot education are the exact tools needed in order to problem solve when determining the disposition of our customers. Although we can respond to emergencies independently, collaboration is another tool we use to provide positive patient outcomes.