

## **CARING FOR CUTTING EDGE BREAST RECONSTRUCTION PROCEDURES IN THE PACU**

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### **Background Information:**

- New options for Breast Reconstruction, Deep Inferior Epigastric Perforator Flap (DIEP) are being performed in our major teaching hospital.
- Nursing expertise is necessary in the immediate post op period to ensure high quality outcomes
- Challenges with ICU bed availability and consistent nursing care for this high risk patient population
- Plastic surgery team partnered with Perianesthesia and Surgical Nursing Leadership to identify a best practice in care pathway for breast reconstruction patients
- PACU nurses were unfamiliar with this patient population and needed specialized training

### **Objectives of Project:**

- Develop a care pathway to incorporate the PACU in caring for post DIEP flap procedure patients
- Enhance staffs knowledge about the critical skills needed to care for the breast reconstruction patient
- Collaborate with Multidisciplinary teams to provide a consistent standard of care
- Identify learning needs among staff to safely monitor flap perfusion and communicate concerns of flap compromise

### **Process of Implementation:**

- Plastic surgery team partnered with Perianesthesia team to create educational content for online learning and bedside resource manual
- Education on Breast Reconstruction procedure, flap assessments and electronic documentation best practices
- Shared Outlook calendar created for planning of DIEP flap surgical cases

### **Statement of Successful Practice:**

- Structured process to orient a core group of nurses to care for this specialized patient population
- Nurse Champions provide feedback to continuously improve nursing practice and process improvement
- Patient care in the PACU has allowed for a smooth transition to the surgical floors which has ultimately provided a successful consistent pathway for patients
- Plastic surgical teams are pleased with new patient care pathway as it has allowed for improved patient outcomes and satisfaction

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:**

- This successful collaboration has allowed perianesthesia nursing to take an active approach in transforming the care of specialized patient populations
- Perianesthesia nurses are engaged, proactive and excited about enhancing nursing care within our unit