

TRANSITIONS IN CARE: THE INFAMOUS HANDOFF

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Background Information: The SurgiCentre nursing team is a unique combination of nurses who nurture and respect each other in a professional, caring, and learning environment. Our group of nurses are experts in the Operating Room, Pre, and Post-Operative areas. The Shared Governance Council in the SurgiCentre at the University of Pennsylvania identified inconsistent nursing communication during the patient handoff. This handoff occurs when the patient transitions from pre-op to intra-op and from intra-op to post-op care.

Objectives of Project: Our objective was multifaceted: create a template to standardize key concepts, identify critical patient information to communicate, and provide education to staff on transitions in care.

Process of Implementation: Evidenced based practice on handoff communication was discussed at Shared Governance. Members identified inconsistent practice during patient transitions. Members compiled a comprehensive list of pertinent patient information for each patient transition. Nursing staff in each area was consulted on the list and encouraged to make additional suggestions. A survey was sent out to the SurgiCentre Nursing team. The team identified information that should be included in each handoff and made suggestions for additional patient care concerns. 90% of staff responded to the survey. Based on the results of the staff survey, tools were created to provide a template of information on what should be discussed during each handoff. The tools were supplied to the Pre, Intra, and Post Op area as a resource for consistent hand off communication. Education was completed during in-services, individual learning occurred, and sign in sheets were collected to ensure the same education was provided to all staff.

Statement of Successful Practice: The nursing staff successfully demonstrated competency in using the tool as a guide for consistent communication and completing the education. The tool was uploaded to the information website and orientation packet for new employees. Auditing is ongoing by Shared Governance Council Members.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: In the spirit of lifelong learning, our nursing team constantly seeks knowledge to improve nursing practice. Using Evidenced Based Practice to develop ways to improve communication during transitions contributes to increased patient safety, quality, and satisfaction.