

## **In the Zone: A Team Approach to Pre- and Post-Operative Patient Care**

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**Background Information:** Staffing in a Perianesthesia unit is a continuous challenge with an ever-changing surgery schedule. An offsite surgical hospital for a large academic medical center previously had separate preoperative and postoperative units. With the opening of a new hospital in 2018, a zone staffing model was used to implement a blended perianesthesia unit.

**Objectives of Project:** To increase nurse competencies throughout the perianesthesia continuum, coordinate varied staffing schedules with fluctuating surgery schedules to optimize efficiency and safety, adhere to ASPAN standards and avoid OR delays.

**Process of Implementation:** The Unit Coordinator and Educator shadowed other blended perianesthesia units within the system to evaluate their processes. A new perianesthesia unit zone staffing model was designed to meet our unique patient population, as well as the physical layout of the new unit. This unit has 24 bays with the capacity to staff up to four zones. When making the daily staffing schedule, bays are clustered together by anesthesiologist and surgeon. Nursing staff is then assigned with the latest scheduled nursing staff assigned to the latest OR end times. The assignments are made in such a manner to decrease overall staff footprint and utilize Lean processes.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Competency in all aspects of perianesthesia care has increased nursing proficiencies and improved delivery of patient care. Clustering of physicians and nurses by zones has enhanced the ability to respond to changes in the surgical schedule and prevented surgical delays. The same pre/post staff and OR staff work together for continuity of care through the day. Despite the magnitude of these changes, all members of the interdisciplinary team have embraced the zone staffing model and Press Ganey outpatient scores have sustained above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile rank.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** Zone staffing increases nurse autonomy, providing an opportunity for bedside nurses to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Zone staffing also promotes accountability, teamwork, and inter- and intra-professional communication, as members of the zone are accountable to each other in real time. Increased nurse autonomy and improved accountability, teamwork, and communication yield better patient experiences.