

Orientation Pathway

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Background information

- Post Covid, nursing staff have retired and/or sought employment elsewhere resulting in multiple open positions in our tertiary care perianesthesia area.
- The challenges of working in the healthcare environment have led to a lack of experienced nurses applying for our positions. This has led our leadership team to reconsider hiring nurses who in the past would not be considered qualified.

Objectives of Project

- Develop competitive and attractive recruitment to increase the volume of applicants on job postings for the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).
- Increase access to becoming a PACU RN to develop nurses on a pathway appropriate for their learning needs.
- Complete an orientation pathway based on nursing experience and necessary training to become a competent, safe PACU nurse.

Process of Implementation

Unit leadership developed three pathways of PACU orientation:

1. Our twelve-week orientation was condensed to 8 weeks for experienced PACU, ICU/ER (critical care) experienced nurses.
2. Developed a 20-week internship for non-critical care experienced nurses includes:
 - ASPAN Competency based orientation program for RNs in the perianesthesia setting. Critical Care Orientation (CCO) offered via American Association Critical Care Nurses (AACN)
 - Balanced clinical exposure/practice and didactic curriculum.
3. Graduate Nurse enrolled in the 26-week internship for new grad nurses includes:
 - ASPAN Competency based orientation program for RNs in the perianesthesia setting. Critical Care Orientation (CCO) offered via American Association Critical Care Nurses (AACN)
 - Balanced clinical exposure/practice and didactic curriculum.

Statement of successful Practice

Since the implementation of our revised orientation program:

- Experienced nurses are getting a thorough orientation at a fast-track pace.
- Eleven nurses have successfully completed the 20-week Internship.
- Seven new grads have completed the 26-week Internship.

Support groups and mentors continue to follow and advocate for the new grads. We continue to have success recruiting interns to our PACU as evidenced by 4 new graduates in the 26-week internship and 5 applicants on board for the next 20-week pathway.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:

- The current and future short staffing crisis across the United States has hindered many specialty units in healthcare. This poses many challenges recruiting new candidates to the perianesthesia department. By broadening our orientation pathway in the PACU, it allows the perianesthesia areas to be attractive, competitive and a desirable area to recruit the best candidates through a complex orientation safely and efficiently.
- As the staffing shifts and grows with a variety of experience, the UH PACU has acknowledged the need for additional support. Implementation of mentorship, surgical spotlight presentations, journal club and educational tip sheets as well as, quarterly hands on, skill and competency sessions are being piloted as additional support mechanisms.
- Collaborating as a team for additional support and resource building, the charge nurses and veteran staff continue to support the new grads in their journey from novice to expert nurse.