May the Task Force Be with You: Nurse Led Collaboration and Innovation in Developing A Novel Staffing Matrix for a Newly Blended Perianesthesia Unit

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Background Information: As healthcare institutions continue to adjust to meet patient needs. A 171-bed community teaching hospital sought to ease staffing constraints and care for Perianesthesia patients more efficiently. A leadership decision was made to merge the staff of three areas of the Perianesthesia department, giving nurses the skills to care for patients during all phases of their perianesthesia experience. As a Magnet institution, it was important that staff guide changes to the practice environment, so a Task Force including staff from all impacted areas was formed.

Objectives of Project: Form a cohesive working group that would develop a strong staffing model for the new, blended unit.

Process of Implementation: A Task Force comprised of Perianesthesia nurses and unit leadership was formed and groundwork was laid for a successful nurse led merge:

- Initial meetings were scheduled every other week approximately 2-4 hours.
- Based on staff input, this was changed to a retreat model, meeting once a month for 6-8 hours and integrating team building that proved much more productive.
- Literature, ASPAN standards, local volume and flow data were reviewed.
- Information disseminated to all staff via huddles with staff and management, and face to face via committee members to peers.
- Microsoft Teams site was central electronic resource, including all task force information, feedback forums and surveys to engage all staff and gather information on things such preferences in shift start times, hours worked and department preference.
- An evidence-based staffing matrix for the combined unit was created.

Statement of Successful Practice: Task Force autonomy grew, and members felt empowered working towards a common goal. An evidence-based staffing matrix was created, while supporting staff engagement, professional and leadership development.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Peri-Anesthesia Nursing: Perianesthesia staff engagement, accountability and collaboration can be a powerful tool in building structures that support efficiency, patient safety and staff satisfaction.