

Rescue Ready: Simulation Solution for Airway Rescue Scenario in Phase 1 Recovery (after General Anesthesia-GA) Class

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Abstract Background Information: In the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), inexperienced nurses or nurses without ICU background may not have an opportunity to observe or rescue an acute airway emergency during their orientation period. Airway rescue is a fundamental and crucial aspect to basic PACU nursing care, yet it occurs infrequently thanks to advances in practices aimed at preventing such incidents.

Objectives of Project: To replicate this scenario and teach appropriate steps to airway rescue in a PACU setting, a simulation was created, in collaboration with the Clinical Simulation Program at University of Wisconsin Hospital.

Process of Implementation: A scenario was created and implemented of a decompensating airway patient. Learning Objectives are/were:

1. Recognize s/s of residual/inadequate reversal of neuromuscular blockade
2. Call for emergency assistance
3. Provide immediate airway rescue to patient (including BVM set up, jaw thrust and/or chin lift, and begin rescue breaths)

Statement of Successful Practice: Using a retrospective Post-then-Pre-Design, learners' self-reported changes in knowledge were assessed. In the 2024 Phase 1 Recovery (after GA) classes held in January, March, and July, learners (n=32) reported a 33% increase in understanding of basic care of patients recovering from anesthetics, a 38% increase in understanding of various potential complications occurring in the immediate post-anesthesia period, and a 34% increase in understanding the safety requirements for patients in Phase 1 recovery care.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Utilizing simulation to replicate a low frequency/high risk event like inadequate reversal of neuromuscular blockade after general anesthesia may assist less experienced RN staff who are new to providing care in the Phase 1 after General Anesthesia environment (PACU).