



# Enculturation of International Nurses within Perianesthesia

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## Introduction

Recruitment and retention of nurses is a focus of many organizations in the United States. Starting in 2022, International Nurse recruitment was a strategy used to address staffing vacancies. As a new program, there was not an established orientation model or support structure for International Nurses. In collaboration with staff nurses, leadership, and nursing education, a comprehensive orientation plan to assist with International Nurses' transition to practice and life outside of work was implemented in a 24-bed blended Perianesthesia Unit.

## Objectives

The main objective of this project was to implement a comprehensive orientation plan to meet the needs of the International Nurse, provide clinical and home support, and develop efficient integration strategies to ensure their satisfaction and retention. The first focus was clinical competency and transition to practice. Other countries perform all perioperative nursing roles, including intraoperative care. Each nurse had a different orientation based upon their previous roles and how comfortable they felt in each phase of care.

Orientation was planned to learn pre-op, Phase 2 and then transition to Phase 1 care. Technology differences with electronic health records and equipment was also a focus on orientation. Additional support through classroom and lectures in adjunct to consistent and supportive preceptors was provided.

Enculturation outside of work was crucial and added to their feelings of security. Housing, banking, healthcare and insurance, transportation, obtaining food, and how to complete taxes were some of the information leadership covered with employees. Celebrating their culture and holidays at work also demonstrated the staff and leadership's commitment to engagement.



## Process of Implementation

Since inception, we have successfully onboarded multiple International Nurses in Perianesthesia. Integration of the International Nurse to the team, having support at home and in the work-environment is crucial for their retention. This was successful with leadership commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

International nurses bring such a diverse experience within perianesthesia. The International Nurses were unfamiliar with ASPAN Standards, which was used as an opportunity to expand their knowledge. We incorporated ASPAN e-Learnings through EBSCO Host into their orientation to implement Standards into practice. We also tailored orientation to their specific nursing experience. One nurse was successful in transitioning through orientation from pre-op to Phase 1 and 2 collectively, while others needed more time in Phase 1 orientation. Our Critical Care Boot Camp included hand-on learning of equipment which included: Philips monitors, EVDs, ventilators, advanced airway management, and pharmacology review.

Making the International Nurse feel welcome and a valuable part of the team was critical. We gave our new International Nurses the opportunity to share about themselves too including: fun facts, their family, their nursing career, what made them decide to come to the US, and how they like to spend their time outside of work. It really opened the lines of communication and gave an understanding of where they were coming from. We sought to learn more about their cultures and celebrate it, but also share our culture with them as well. We also celebrated Filipino American Heritage month. This gave the staff the opportunity to cook Filipino food and also learn more about their culture. We also shared the celebrations of Nurses' Week.

Lastly, we focused on their transition outside of work. Housing was assisted by our recruitment team. We provided a shuttle to and from work from certain apartment locations near campus. Many chose to purchase a vehicle, which was different for many staff. We used connections from our benefits team to provide additional benefits education for International Nurses. This was very helpful as insurance varied in many of the countries all the International Nurses came from.

## Conclusions

International nurses can be utilized and integrated to fulfill crucial roles within Perianesthesia. Orientation can be successfully accomplished through a competency-based approach. Enculturation outside of work is also vital in feelings of security. Leadership support is critical to their team integration and transition to practice. Overall, International Nurses can strengthen clinical operations, reinforce inclusivity, and offer new perspectives to Perianesthesia.

## References

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