Charging Ahead: Improving Team Communication Through the Formation of a Charge Nurse Committee



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BACKGROUND

In April of 2024, the PACU adopted a 10-person Charge Nurse committee to address workflow issues.

Areas for improvement identified:

- Inconsistent charge nurse practices
- Staff dissatisfaction with workflow
- Need for improved interdisciplinary communication
 - Anesthesia provider
 - OR RN/CRNA bedside handoff
- Increased OR holds increased throughput and discharge times
- PT/OT relations
 - o increased orthostatic episodes
 - equipment in corridors
- Poor Pharmacy relationship

ROLE OF CHARGE NURSE

WEXFORD WORKFLOW

Patient load includes Preop and Recovery for all OR cases, Cath Lab, IR, Gls, and Pediatrics

All nurses staff Preop, Phase I & Phase II

- Preop 12 bays
- Phase I 14 bays
- Phase II 8 bays

In the month of February - 870 patients went through Wexford Perioperative Units

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTATION

STANDARDIZE WORKFLOW AMONG CHARGE NURSES

- O Meetings were established on a monthly basis to review oconsistency, address issues, and share best practices
- Reinforce that every charge nurse follows the same process for rounding, handoffs, and staff delegation
- o Regularly gather input from staff to identify areas of improvement and adjust workflows accordingly

OPTIMIZE PHASE I & II THROUGHPUT

- Strictly adhere to clear clinical criteria for moving patients
 from Phase I to Phase II
 - Ensure appropriate staffing levels in the PACU per ASPAN guidelines
- O A fast-track process that moves patients directly to Phase II, bypassing Phase I

OBJECTIVES

To ensure the highest standard of patient care by:

- Addressing clinical challenges
- Promoting best practices
- Improving workflows
- Facilitating interdisciplinary communication

STATEMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE

By providing a collaborative platform for charge nurses to share best practices, address challenges, and implement solutions, the committee has played a pivotal role in evolving the practice of perianesthesia nursing within our PACU.

IMPROVE INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION

Stress the importance of OR/CRNA handoff, request anesthesia

Oproviders signout to PACU charge, confirm OR charge RN is reachable via Vocera

- O Establish clear guidelines on when and where patients work with PT/OT
- Oreated shadow opportunities with Pharmacy to better understand each other's workflow

IMPLICATIONS FOR PERIANESTHESIA NURSING

- Enhance patient experience
- Foster a supportive, empowered environment for nurses
- Charge nurses act as advocates for staff nurses
- Shape an informed and effective Pre/Post department