

Bridging the Disconnect: Lines and Drains Communication from OR to PACU

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Abstract Background Information: Accurate documentation of lines and drains is critical for ensuring patient safety and continuity of care during the transition from the Operating Room (OR) to the Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). An issue has been identified concerning the failure of OR nurses to document the placement of lines and drains that are performed intraoperatively by surgeons. This documentation gap can lead to delays in care, increased risk of complications, and communication breakdowns among interdisciplinary teams.

Objectives of Project: To enhance adherence to documentation protocols for lines and drains placed in the OR through staff education and training.

Process of Implementation: The implementation involved a series of live in-service training sessions conducted by the PACU staff for the OR staff over a three-month period. Chart audits, including peer-to-peer feedback, were included in the process. Additionally, the matter was escalated to the MD-RN Committee, which engaged the OR educators to ensure comprehensive education of all personnel regarding line documentation protocols.

Statement of Successful Practice: Preliminary findings from a three-month retrospective chart review indicated that in over 40% of cases, at least one line or drain was not documented by OR nurses prior to the transfer to the PACU. Following the collaboration with OR education, PACU nurses have reported a notable improvement in the accuracy of lines and drains documentation by OR nurses, with fewer than 10% of patients now missing the correct line or drain information.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: The retrospective chart review highlighted significant gaps in documentation practices among OR nurses regarding lines and drains before patient transfer to the PACU. To address these issues, maintaining interdisciplinary collaboration, and ongoing training in communication and education on documentation will be essential. Moreover, integrating quality improvement initiatives and utilizing technology such as prompts in electronic health records (EHR) will ensure accurate documentation and enhance overall safe patient care.