

PeriAnesthesia Fellowship: A Supplement to Orientation

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Abstract Background Information: The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact nursing, especially specialty areas, to this day. With many veteran critical care nurses having retired and younger ones pursuing advanced practice degrees taking them away from the bedside, the experienced pool of ideal candidates for PACU positions has become strained across our organization. It was identified that many new PeriAnesthesia nurses, without a critical care background, often lack the degree of critical thinking required to be as successful as they could be following the completion of orientation. Understanding these skills must be developed, shared knowledge deficits were identified by PeriAnesthesia unit leaders and directly incorporated into a new System-wide PeriAnesthesia Fellowship curriculum.

Objectives of Project: Three Fellowship objectives were established:

- Develop a curriculum within a structured PeriAnesthesia Fellowship that is completed post-orientation with an advanced focus on all phases of care using didactics, clinical application, and simulation.
- Promote and retain dedicated nurses who successfully complete the fellowship program.
- Produce a highly trained nurse aligning with the scope and current ASPAN practices of PeriAnesthesia nursing, to provide effective, efficient, and quality patient care leading to improved patient outcomes.

Process of Implementation: The participants of the Fellowship are selected by the Nursing Professional Developmentalists. The Fellowship is designed to supplement what the orientee has learned rather than be a portion of the orientation program. It consists of four monthly sessions for a total of 32 multimodal educational hours. Topics include, but are not limited to, the ASPAN Standards, anesthesia medications, and care of the post-anesthesia patient.

Statement of Successful Practice: In addition to active participation and observations made by the course facilitators, progress is tracked via pre, mid, and post-survey. The goal of these surveys is to determine the degree of improvement among the participant's measured knowledge and confidence.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: By implementing a PeriAnesthesia Fellowship, novice PeriAnesthesia nurses will acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to support the development of improved critical thinking required for providing critical care. By enhancing patient education, improved patient outcomes will naturally follow. The Fellowship affords participants the opportunity to share experiences with colleagues across the organization and build new professional relationships within the PeriAnesthesia community.