

Heart of the Matter: Transitioning Invasive Cardiology's Staff to Phase I Recovery

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Abstract Background Information: The increasing volume and complexity of cardiovascular procedures in the Invasive Cardiology Laboratory (IC), including electrophysiology and structural heart interventions, demanded a streamlined and safe recovery process. Historically, patients undergoing these procedures have recovered in a dedicated PACU area. IC nurses had a specialized skill set tailored to managing post-anesthesia care for these patients. Their expertise ensured rapid response to complications, enhanced patient safety, and improved workflow efficiency. Expanding their role in recovery from moderate sedation to Phase I, supported the growing procedural demands while maintaining high standards of care within the IC.

Objectives of Project: This initiative aimed to create a safe, efficient post-procedural recovery model by recovering Phase I patients directly in IC, streamlining transitions, and improving discharge times. It enhanced procedural room utilization and patient flow while leveraging the specialized skills of IC nurses. Collaboration with anesthesia and care teams ensures high standards of safety and quality.

Process of Implementation: IC nurses received comprehensive training on PACU recovery protocols, including airway management, hemodynamic monitoring, and pain control. Nurses completed an education day led by the PACU educator, shadowed PACU nurses for three days, and were signed off on competencies. During go-live, PACU RNs supported the transition, overseeing care and ensuring safe integration of Phase I recovery practices within the Invasive Cardiology setting.

The recovery area was equipped with a designated PACU cart, supplies, and supporting policies. A streamlined workflow was established for transferring patients from the procedure table to recovery bays.

Statement of Successful Practice: Scope Expansion and Standards Alignment: Invasive Cardiology nurses successfully expanded their scope to include Phase I recovery, meeting ASPAN's standards for perianesthesia care.

Positive Outcomes:

1. Improved patient throughput and reduced PACU dependency.
2. Increased nurse confidence and interdisciplinary collaboration.
3. Sustained continuity of care by recovering patients in familiar, specialized environments.
4. Established a sustainable model that supports PACU capacity and maintains safety.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: This process expanded the scope of practice for IC nurses through specialized training and offered a replicable model for improving perianesthesia care in high-acuity settings. By prioritizing

patient-centered recovery and innovative care delivery, it supported system-wide efficiency, resilience, and alignment with ASPAN's mission to ensure safe, individualized care.