A Position Statement on Perianesthesia Advanced Practice Nursing

The American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses (ASPAN) has the responsibility for defining the practice of perianesthesia nursing. ASPAN, therefore, sets forth this position to define the scope of practice for the perianesthesia advanced practice nurse (APN.)

Background

From 1994 through 1996, ASPAN's Clinical Practice Committee and Standards and Guidelines Subcommittee coordinated a broad-based process to review and research advanced nursing practices throughout the United States. The process identified the following issues pertaining to perianesthesia advanced level practices:

1. APNs should have a minimum of a Master's Degree in Nursing.

2. APNs should have advanced clinical expertise in their area of specialty.

3. Currently, there is a lack of graduate perianesthesia nursing curriculum.

4. Research supports the role of the APN in the health care environment.

5. The establishment of the advanced practice role recognizes, promotes and advances the practice of professional nursing.

6. APN strengthens the nursing professions' scientific and research based practice.

Position

It is, therefore, the position of ASPAN that the role of the APN be recognized in the perianesthesia care environment. The APN employs specialized knowledge and skills in the care of perianesthesia patients and their families. ASPAN recommends that the APN:

1. possess a minimum of a Master's Degree in Nursing;

2. integrate the role components of clinical practice, education, research, management/leadership and consultation;

3. function in collegial relationships with nurses, physicians, CRNAs, nurse midwives and other health care providers;

4. be certified in postanesthesia nursing (CPAN®) and/or ambulatory perianesthesia nursing (CAPA®).

Expected Outcomes

ASPAN shall endorse the title "Advanced Practice Nurse" to designate those individuals who are practicing in the perianesthesia environment and are in either the clinical nurse specialist (CNS) or nurse practitioner (NP) roles. This title shall in no way be construed to indicate a merger of the CNS and NP functions.

ASPAN priorities regarding perianesthesia Advanced Nursing Practice are to:

1. develop core curriculum for perianesthesia graduate nursing education;

2. support increased funding for postgraduate perianesthesia nursing education;

3. explore and promote perianesthesia APN role development;

4. investigate the impact of the perianesthesia APN's role on the health care delivery system.

ASPAN, as the voice of perianesthesia nursing practice, must externalize this information by sharing this position with organizations involved with advanced practice nursing or the provision of patient care in the perianesthesia environment, as well as organizations involved in the education of the advanced practice nurse.

Approval of Statement

This statement was approved by a vote of the ASPAN Board of Directors on November 2, 1996 in Orlando, Florida.

This position statement was reviewed and updated at the October 2007 meeting of the Standards and Guidelines Committee in Batesville, Indiana.

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