

## **Standardized Orientation for Post-Operative Nurses**

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**Background Information:** A nurse's ability to safely and efficiently practice in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) requires a strong foundation. Upon completion of a four-week preceptorship, newly hired nurses consistently reported feeling apprehensive about recovering patients independently. Post orientation feedback from nurses indicated that our orientation lacked key exposures, overall direction, and formal preceptor preparation. A closer look at our orientation process revealed many additional issues related to case assignments, inconsistency with preceptor pairings, as well as unstructured and inadequate resources. All of these problems added up to an ineffective orientation process and an unstable foundation for onboarding PACU nurses.

### **Objectives of Project:**

- Redesign orientation binder
- Develop an exposure tracker
- Utilize exposure tracking to guide future experiences and set weekly goals
- Cultivate a bank of reliable and consistent preceptors

**Process of Implementation:** We redesigned our orientation binder to create a lean and focused resource guide for newly hired nurses. Nurses from a mix of skill levels were then given the binder to review and edit. An exposure tracker was developed with our most common cases listed by surgical specialty to be tallied and then utilized to hone in on lacking experiences. PACU-specific tips and tricks were compiled into a user friendly file. Potential preceptors, identified by PACU leadership, were given training on how to lead and effective preceptorship, general re-education, and were required to successfully complete a set of preceptor competencies.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Newly hired nurses are now reporting increased satisfaction with the orientation process. Comfort levels related to independently recovering patients after orientation have also increased with these nurses. All feedback on the exposure tracker from new hires, preceptors and charge nurses has been positive. Evaluations of preceptor performance have been stellar and audits have demonstrated our goal of achieving consistency between preceptors has been reached.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** Providing a standardized orientation process, which can be tailored to comprehensively fulfill each nurse's individual needs, has proved effective for nurses in PACU at Children's Hospital Los Angeles and can be adopted for PACU nurse nationwide.