

Improving Work-life Balance in the PACU to Cultivate an Environment of Mindfulness While Building Nursing Resilience

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Background Information: The Mindful Ethical Practice and Resilience Academy (MEPRA) training advocates for nurses to build resilience by using mindfulness in their practice. Nursing resilience is crucial to handling morally distressful situations that challenge nurses daily. Staff attended a “train the trainer” course, embracing and encouraging coworkers to improve self-care strategies for themselves and their patients.

Objectives of Project: The first set of objectives included: defining the need for moral resilience and the use of mindfulness while caring for patients in the post anesthesia care unit (PACU). The second set of objectives included: staff education about the resources available when facing ethically distressful situations in the PACU and examining work-life balance to build resilience.

Process of Implementation: PACU staff attended MEPRA, which led to the formation of the Resilience Committee. The committee focused then educated staff via emails, posters, and huddles. Staff completed surveys to help them assess their work-life balance. Management and the Resilience Committee discussed the results with the goal of implementing changes to improve communications and scheduling processes that assisted staff with work life balance.

Statement of Successful Practice: Sharing the information from the MEPRA seminar has introduced alternative ways for the PACU staff to address daily, ethically, challenging dilemmas. Staff began utilizing the tranquility and exercise rooms provided by the hospital. Charge nurse communications have increased and improved. Several nurses have reported using mindfulness during stressful situations in the PACU. Nurses further reported the use of daily meditation practices. Changes in scheduling and increased communication resulted from staff surveys.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: MEPRA training advocates for nurses to build resiliency by using mindful practice. Nursing resilience is crucial for handling morally distressful situations. Improving work life balance in the PACU resulted from improving communication, scheduling flexibility, and increasing needed supplies as identified by staff. Mindful communication led to the opportunity for staff to care for themselves while building nursing resilience.