

Tell Me More

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Background Information: Communication with our patients and families at the Ambulatory Surgery Centers helps create a positive experience while maintaining a patient/family centered environment. With ongoing questions regarding the flow of the surgical day from these families, one of our Ambulatory Surgery Center committee's realized the need for a tool to convey this information at the most opportune time.

Objectives of Project: Create a standardized welcome letter for all Ambulatory Surgery Centers to give to families at check-in. In doing this, patients' families will be made aware of the flow of the day, how to understand the tracking board, and what area(s) they will be able to visit.

Process of Implementation: One of the Ambulatory Surgery Center's had a handout specific for that center that was given to family members. Our committee reviewed this original letter, collected information from all sites, and standardized the letter to meet the needs of all the Ambulatory Surgery Centers. Our patient tracking board was also explained in this letter.

Statement of Successful Practice: Describing the flow of the day, different areas that the patient will travel through, and when visitation is allowed has decreased the amount of questions asked of our front desk staff. Patient family members have an increased awareness of what to expect of the day. The letter helps to communicate the importance of pediatric patients' having one legal guardian remain present in the waiting area while the patient is in the operating/procedure room. The front desk has had more family members making them aware if they must step away and providing them with a phone number where they can be reached. Patients have expressed appreciation of having written in the letter to not take photos or videos of them during their time at the Ambulatory Surgery Center to maintain patient privacy.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Promoting strong patient/family centered care into everyday practice helps to engage families in their loved ones progress. The welcome letter helps the family or responsible person to understand the timeframe, flow of the day, and how much we value their opinions and concerns.