

## **Improving Nursing Compliance with Mandatory Documentation in F10 PACU**

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**Background Information:** In the F10 Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU), there is significant variability in nursing practice related to mandatory elements of PACU documentation, impacting compliance with the Joint Commission and ASPAN professional standards. Chart audit reviews revealed a lack of standardization of patient care documentation among nurses, particularly concerning omitting essential elements like Fall Risk Assessment, Care Plan, Education, Pain Assessment and Reassessment, and PACU Admission and Ongoing assessments. These inconsistencies affect continuity of care and, ultimately, postoperative patient outcomes.

**Objective:** Our objective is to influence nursing practice by documenting mandatory elements of postoperative care to ensure completion, accuracy, and timeliness of documentation.

**Process of Implementation:** Conducted pre- and post-intervention chart audits. Our assessment revealed significant issues, including delays in Fall Risk Assessment, insufficient documentation of patient Education factors (First Dose Medications and After Anesthesia), and missing procedure-specific assessments. Our interventions included educational staff in-services emphasizing the importance of complete, timely, and accurate clinical documentation. We also disseminated visual aids with EMR screenshots of mandatory elements, demonstrated real-time charting, made ourselves available on the unit as a resource for questions, and consistently reinforced these practices through emails and EPIC chat.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** Post-intervention chart audits between January and March 2023 revealed a significant improvement in nursing compliance with the completeness and timeliness of documentation of the following mandatory elements: Fall Risk Assessment, Care Plan, Patient Education, Pain Assessment and Reassessment, and Admission and Ongoing Assessments.

**Implication for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing** To advance PACU nursing practices, it is essential to improve the usability of the EMR, particularly PACU Flowsheets. Additionally, it is important to address the perception among nursing staff who view documentation as a burden that diverts them from patient care. Achieving standardization will require ongoing chart audit reviews and consistently reinforcing NYP policies.