

Journey to Beacon: Trailblazing Culture of Excellence

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Background Information: The American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN) Beacon Award for Excellence honors units that distinguish themselves by improving every facet of patient care. A Perioperative Services nurse lead committee formed to conquer the journey to Beacon designation.

Objectives of Project: The Beacon Award for Excellence provides critical care units recognition at three levels of designation- gold silver and bronze. Designated critical care units meet or exceed national quality standards based on proven indicators of excellence within five specific categories set forth by AACN. Achieving national recognition is aligned with the organization's nursing strategic plan of structural empowerment to include national recognition of nursing excellence for Perioperative Services.

Process of Implementation: Our committee collaborated twice monthly to complete the award application. We began with an overview of the application process and proposed submission timeline. Next a unit profile audit determined our eligibility and readiness to apply. Each month the committee focused on one of five scored categories. The committee included a description of the unit's approach to illustrate how the unit achieves a goal and the expected outcomes. Application exemplars highlighted detailed and quantifiable measures of processes. The application was reviewed by a first and second reader within the organization prior to final submission.

Statement of Successful Practice: Our unit received the Beacon Award for Excellence Silver designation in August 2022. AACN found our application reflected a unit with an effective systematic approach to nursing excellence with participation by key stakeholders. Feedback included recognition for exemplary practice with the implementation of the Post-Operative Urinary Retention (POUR) Protocol translating evidence into practice and contributions to the mission and vision. Our unit joins six other critical care units within the organization who have earned Beacon designation. The granting of this prestigious award includes seven other Perioperative Care Units nationally and the first in the state.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Our silver-level award proudly signifies innovative and continuous improvement strategies in perioperative nursing while leading the standard for nursing excellence. The three-year designation indicates exceptional patient care influencing positive outcomes.