

## **UTSouthwestern** Medical Center

### Abstract

**Introduction:** Nurse residency programs are a critical workforce development tool to enhance professional nursing's capacity to provide safe, efficient and sustainable patient care (Carman, et.al. 2021). Studies have shown that these programs have led to competency attainment, satisfaction and confidence among new graduate nurses.

**Objectives of Project:** This project evaluates the degree to which PACU nurse residents and fellows apply what they learned during a PACU track-specific program.

**Process of Implementation:** Our PACU track-specific program was initiated in 2016 and has aided 24 nurses to transition to functioning members of the PACU team. A post-residency, post-fellowship survey was developed using Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Model: Level 3. This survey was distributed to PACU nurse residency and fellowship graduates within 1 year of completing the program. Respondents were asked to report positive behavior change, identify significant reasons for the change and provide a specific example that helped them achieve positive result.

Statement of the Successful Practice: Every respondent provided commendable feedback regarding their experience during the program. Two respondents noted that being precepted by experienced PACU nurses was the most valuable aspect of the program. The responses revealed that 75% of the respondents strongly agree that they are successfully applying what they learned from the program and 87% of them attributed help from their colleagues as the most significant reason.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research: This provides compelling evidence that our PACU track-specific nurse residency and fellowship led to positive behavior change among nurses who transitioned to PACU clinical setting. Other perianesthesia departments can model our PACU track-specific nurse residency and fellowship program in leading positive behavior change for nurses transitioning to PACU.

Nurse residency and fellowship programs are designed to help nurses transition into new practice settings. Our PACU nurse residency is designed to prepare nurses with less than 12 months of experience, while our PACU nurse fellowship is aimed to equip experienced nurses to master new clinical settings. By nurturing them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes for professional success, these programs can improve their critical thinking, communication and problem solving skills thereby increasing nurse retention and satisfaction.

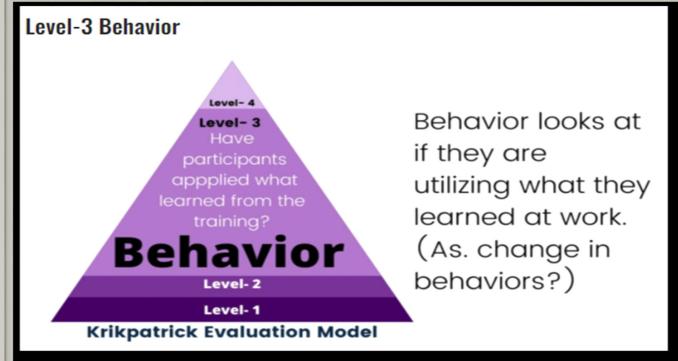
This project utilized Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Model: Level 3 to evaluate whether nurse residents and nurse fellows were truly impacted by the learning and if they are applying what they learn. The Kirkpatrick Model is globally recognized method of evaluating the results of training and learning programs.

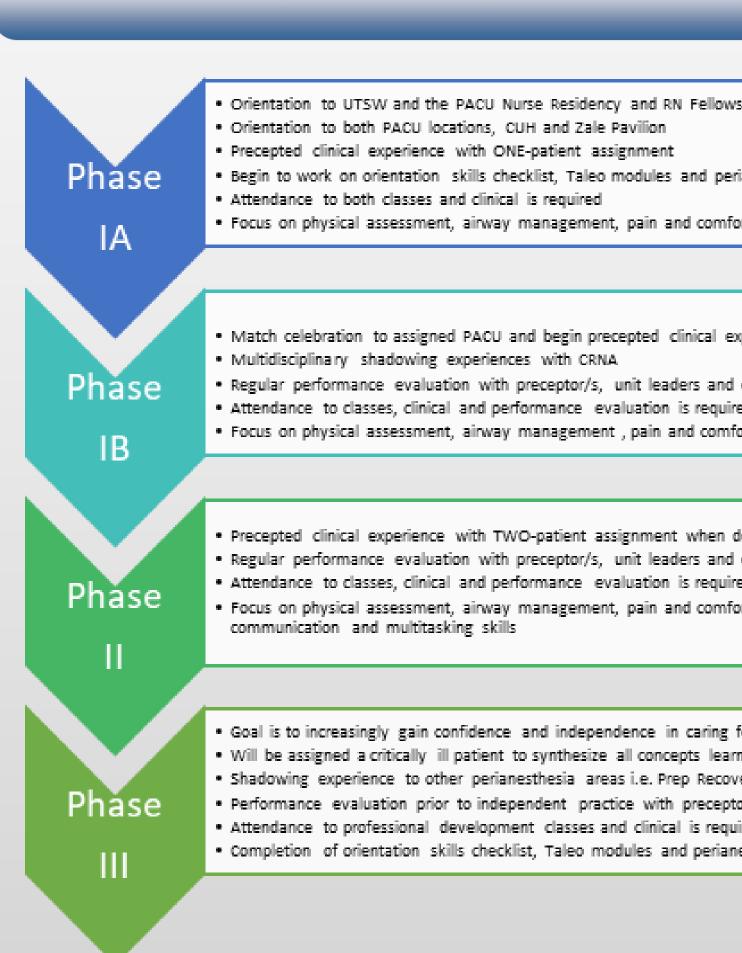
All PACU nurse residents and fellows are expected to complete all curriculum requirements. Nurse fellows have 21 precepted weeks while nurse residents have 25. Nurse residents attend one professional development class every month after preceptorship period until graduation. Nurse fellows complete the program after preceptorship period. PACU curriculum is well-structured and involves multidisciplinary learning to obtain a thorough picture of a surgical patient. It a collaborative effort of unit leadership, clinical educator and preceptors to guide residents and fellows through their journey. It comprises of regular meetings with preceptor, unit leadership team and clinical educator to orientation measure About Six Level-3 Behavior progress. months into their independence, they are Behavior looks at asked to complete a if they are utilizing what the post program survey to learned at work. evaluate if they were Behavior (As. change in truly impacted by the behaviors?) Level- 2 Level- 1 learning.

# **Ensuring Successful Practice Using a PACU Track-Specific Nurse Residency and** Fellowship Program Hazzel H. Gomez, MSN, BSN, RN, CPAN, CAPA, NPD-BC **University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, Texas**

## Background

#### Implementation





Nurse residency programs have been identified as a successful method in easing new nurses into the role as professional nurse; where increased retention and satisfaction of new nurse hires have been proven outcomes (Eckerson, 2018). This PACU track-specific program validated this statement through the meaningful feedback received from the respondents. Modelling the program can help graduate nurses to safely and proficiently practice as registered nurses in PACU. The COVID pandemic nevertheless has made implementation of the program very challenging the last two years, when face-to-face interaction became limited and elective surgeries were suspended which affected learning, especially those of kinesthetic learners.

This project is limited to those who graduated from July 2017 through July 2021 and remained in PACU, either as full time or PRN employee. There are a total of 20 graduates within the time frame, 13 of them have chosen to stay in the same PACU, however only 8 of them responded to the survey.

In pursuit of better staffing retention, it may be worth exploring reasons behind leaving PACU within two years of graduation, for further research.

<b>Curriculum Overview</b>	
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is to increasingly gain confidence and independence in caring for two patients be assigned a critically ill patient to synthesize all concepts learned, including critical thinking owing experience to other perianesthesia areas i.e. Prep Recovery and Pre Surgery Testing, and critical care areas i.e. SICU and NSICU rmance evaluation prior to independent practice with preceptor/s, unit leaders and clinical educator idance to professional development classes and clinical is required pletion of orientation skills checklist, Taleo modules and perianesthesia-specific modules in Elsevier	











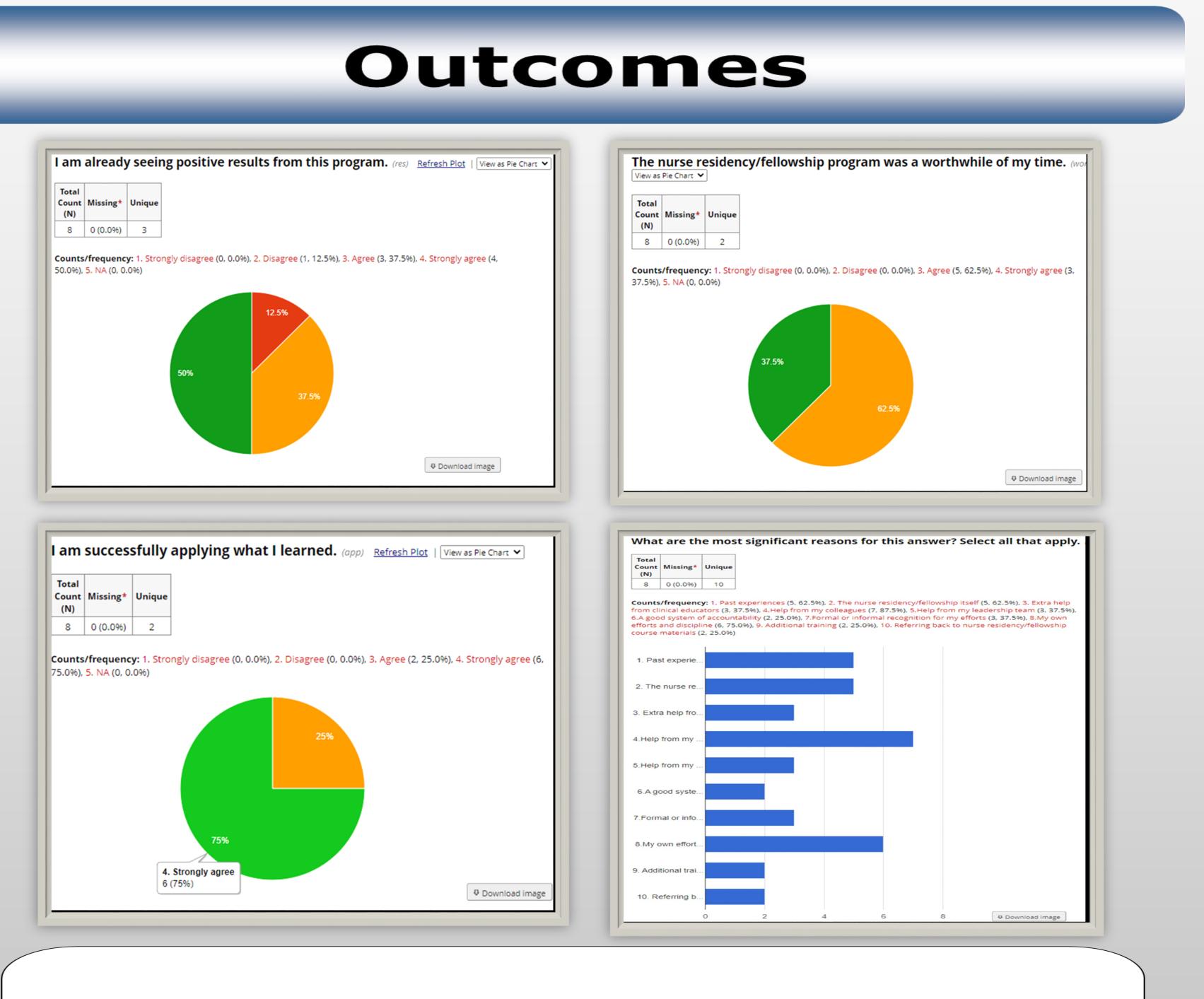








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The PACU track-specific nurse residency and nurse fellowship program proved to ensure successful practice of nurses, new to nursing profession and/or new to perianesthesia specialty. Seventy five percent of respondents strongly agree that they are successfully applying knowledge, skills and attitudes they learned within one year of completing the program, and 100% of them considered that the program was worth their time. Guidance from PACU colleagues has been regarded as the strongest support behind their success. Being precepted by experienced PACU nurses was the most beneficial aspect of the residency program, as one respondent stated. Several of them felt that the fellowship program facilitated their transition into their new role as a PACU nurses with confidence, and reassurance that support is available to them when needed.

#### References

Carman, M., Church, C. and Africa L. (2021) Nurse Residency Programs. Nurse Leader. Vol. 19, Issue 3

Eckerson, C. (2018). The impact of nurse residency programs in the United States on improving retention and satisfaction of new nurse hires: An evidence-based literature review. Nurse Education Today. Vol 71.