

Ensuring Successful Practice Using a PACU-Track-Specific Nurse Residency and Fellowship Program

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Background: 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.

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 residents and fellows 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 advancing the practice of perianesthesia nursing: 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.