

Competency Maintenance in a Perianesthesia Care Unit

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Introduction: The delivery of high-quality and safe healthcare is dependent upon the investment in the training and education of nursing staff. Competency maintenance among nurses is an integral component of such delivery.

Identification of the problem: The majority of perianesthesia nurses identified have out-of-date competencies.

QI question/Purpose of the study: The purpose of this quality improvement project is to improve self-assessed competence following the renewal of a registered nurses' unit based-competencies within a perianesthesia care unit. The proposed project will establish a process for documenting and tracking competencies.

Methods: The two-fold intervention includes competency maintenance sessions and the implementation of a competency portfolio cataloguing system to track the maintenance of competencies. The project will utilize a pre-test and post-test design to evaluate a nurses' self-assessed competence, as well as the uptake of information provided during competency maintenance sessions. Eligible participants for this proposed project include thirty-one registered nurses hired to work in a perianesthesia care unit. Data analysis will include comparing participant self-assessed competence, the proportion of participants with up-to-date competencies, and participant knowledge before and after competency maintenance.

Outcomes/Results: Competency maintenance sessions/data collection began September 16, 2022 and will conclude October 23, 2022. Data analysis will occur immediately following. Dissemination will occur December 3, 2022. We hope to demonstrate that a registered nurse's self-assessed competence will improve following the maintenance of unit-based competencies.

Discussion: Given the complexity of the perianesthesia care unit and the diversity and importance of the nurses' skillset, it is essential that competencies be maintained and documented, and that staff feel competent in the care that is delivered.

Conclusion: Competency maintenance is an integral component of positive patient outcomes. Literature has suggested its importance and its positive correlation with the well-being of patients. A competency portfolio would adequately reflect the culmination of professional work that represents evidence that the perianesthesia nurse has the appropriate skills, comprehension, mindset, and achievements to care for patients.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research: Through the implementation of this project, maintaining a nurse's unit-based competencies will be prioritized and self-assessed competence will improve. Also, through the implementation of this project, a process for documenting and tracking competencies will be established.