

Enhancing Patient Experience from Walter 3 PACU Post Surgical Patients Through Post-Operative In-Person Visit

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Introduction: Walter 3 Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) at Houston Methodist Hospital serves over 13,000 surgical patients annually. Patient experience feedback was previously gathered through Press-Ganey surveys and intermittent inpatient reports, both of which were delayed and lacked PACU-specific insights. Literature emphasizes that timely, patient-centered feedback enhances communication and quality outcomes (Alibrandi et al., 2023; Krist et al., 2020).

Identification of the Problem: In March 2025, Dunn Operating Room (OR) satisfaction scores fell below the 90th percentile, revealing an opportunity to improve the postoperative experience. The lack of a real-time feedback process limited leadership's ability to address recurring concerns in pain management, communication, and postoperative comfort. A structured, unit-based approach was needed to strengthen nurse-patient engagement and improve patient satisfaction.

EPB Question/Purpose: PICOT: In post-surgical patients from Walter 3 PACU, does implementing Day-1 post-operative in-person visits compared to current feedback mechanisms improve satisfaction, pain control, and nausea/vomiting outcomes within one year?

Purpose: To develop a reliable, PACU-specific feedback system that promotes communication, responsiveness, and timely improvements in care quality and patient experience.

Methods/Evidence: Guided by the Iowa Model of Evidence-Based Practice, PACU nurses conducted Day-1 in-person post-operative visits using a paper-based survey addressing pain, nausea/vomiting, and communication. Nurse champions recorded data in Excel and escalated concerns to leadership. Descriptive statistics compared patient satisfaction outcomes with Press-Ganey benchmarks.

Significance of Findings/Outcomes: Following implementation, satisfaction scores improved notably: Dunn OR rose from 91.67% in June to 95.71% in July, while Walter OR maintained 100%. Patients reported feeling heard and supported through compassionate nurse interactions. Staff engagement and morale also improved as feedback was shared and recognized.

Implications for perianesthesia nurses and future research: The Post-Operative Visit initiative established a sustainable, PACU-specific feedback system that fosters communication, trust, and patient-centered excellence. Expansion to additional surgical units and digitization of surveys are planned to further streamline data collection and responsiveness. Continued nurse training in empathetic communication will reinforce the hospital's mission to deliver compassionate, high-quality care for every patient undergoing surgery at Houston Methodist Hospital.