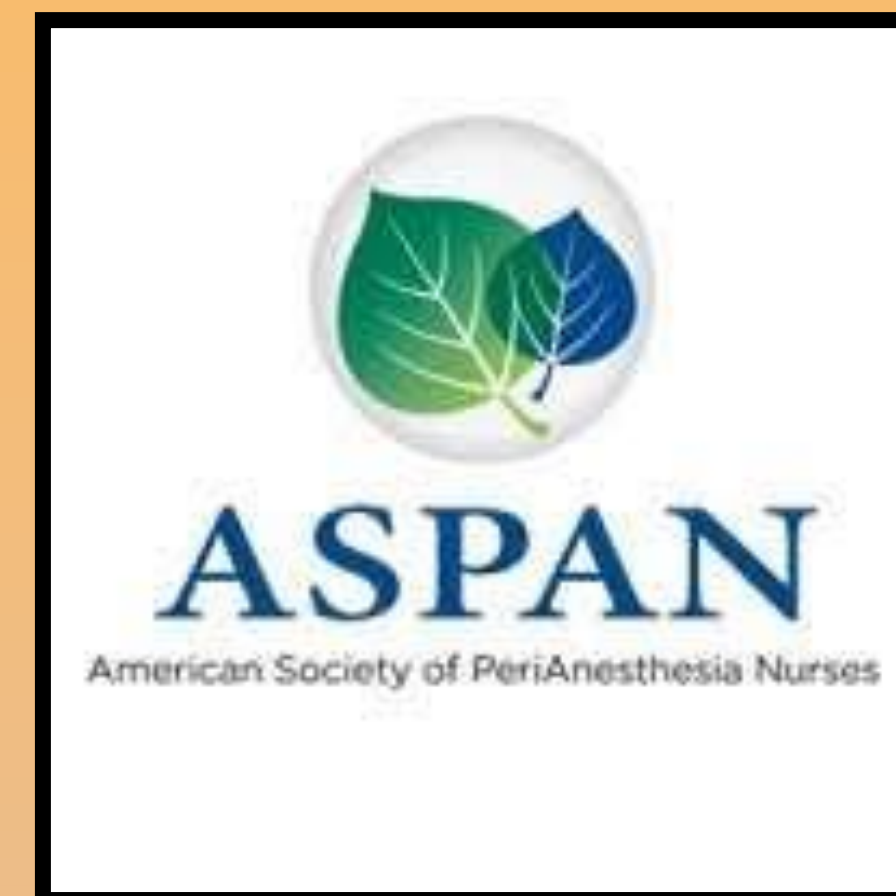


Ensuring Pediatric Competency for Adult PACU Nurses

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Introduction

- ❖ Nurses should have good assessment skills; however, post-anesthesia care unit (PACU) nurses must be particularly diligent in monitoring patients and quick to respond in potentially life-threatening situations.
- ❖ Pediatric and adult patients obviously have different needs when recovering from anesthesia and surgical procedures.



Methods

- ❖ Key imperative included pediatric advanced life support (PALS) certification.
- ❖ Logistics (e.g., fiscal needs; dedicated, protected time for class participation; staffing matrix so all nurses could pursue additional training) were discussed with the chief nursing officer.
- ❖ Program was modeled after the PALS curriculum and various educational pedagogies were incorporated:
 - Case studies
 - Clinical simulation
 - Team building exercises
- ❖ Novice and experienced nurses were paired together to hardwire the skill sets.

Outcomes

- ❖ Over a 14-month period, 30 registered nurses in the PACU became PALS certified
- ❖ Achieved 100% compliance for the unit.

Discussion

- ❖ Didactic and preceptor-supported education has resulted in:
 - Expressed perceptions of enhanced knowledge of pediatric care.
 - Nurses (e.g., clinicians and leaders) having a “voice” in patient safety strategies.
 - Cohesive practice across multiple generations.

Conclusions

- ❖ PACU nurses requested additional training to care for pediatric and neonatal patients.
- ❖ Nurse managers supported quick implementation of the training.
- ❖ Initiatives strengthened bonds between novice and experienced nurses.
- ❖ Enriched nurses’ skill sets.
- ❖ Enhanced culture of child patient safety in the PACU setting.



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Nursing Implications

- ❖ Model provides a roadmap for other peri-anesthesia nurses to evaluate, improve and influence the quality of care for pediatric patients.



References

- ❖ Christensen, R., & Voepel-Lewis, T. (2017). When the worse happens: cardiac arrest in the pediatric PACU. *Journal of PeriAnesthesia Nursing*, 32(4), 382-384,
- ❖ Easthope, S., & O'Brien, D. (2013). Getting to know you – pediatric patients in adult PACU. *Journal of PeriAnesthesia Nursing*, 28(3), e32.

Problem Identification

- ❖ The clinical resource nurse (CRN) conducted a needs assessment to determine educational priorities.
- ❖ With increasing numbers of pediatric patients, additional knowledge and skills were deemed essential.

Purpose

- ❖ A team, comprised of the CRN, direct-care nurses, and leaders created an evidence-based, quality improvement program to afford nurses the competencies to adequately care for pediatric patients.

