NEW GRADUATES IN THE PACU: BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND TRUST THROUGH A RESIDENCY PROGRAM
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BACKGROUND

- Increased nurse vacancies have resulted in the need for graduates to be trained to care for complex patients in high acuity areas.
- Nursing students are educated to care for patients in a broad setting and not specialty areas.
- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations requires that those who are delivering patient care be competent in the service they provide.
- Turnover remains a major problem with new graduates.

QUESTION

In conjunction with VUMC’s critical care program for resident nurses, will new graduates who participate in classes specific for the PACU have a stronger foundation of knowledge, evidence based practice, and critical thinking skills, resulting in their having more confidence and increased trust from their peers?

METHOD

Create PACU specific learning experiences for the new graduate including:

Utilization of ASPAN resources:
- ASPAN Competency Based Orientation and Credentialing resource
- ASPAN Perianesthesia Nursing Standards, Practice Recommendations and Interpretive Statements

Utilization of other IT resources:
- Freeform
- REDCap
- GoogleDocs

Speaker Presentations: anesthesia, preoperative clinic, post-operative nausea and vomiting, nurse wellness, research, delirium, and specific PACU syndromes

Adjunct Opportunities: Shadowing CRNA, Nurse Practitioner, Respiratory Therapist, OR-Circulator, Observation in a Research Studio & Cadaver Lab

Evidence Based Practice: Practice critical appraisal of peer review journal articles. Integrative Research Review of an evidence based topic followed with poster and oral presentations.

EBP Projects

DISCUSSION

- Surveys show continued increase in knowledge
- The majority of feedback from residents about their overall experience with PACU residency was positive.
- Some preceptors still have some concerns about whether they would be capable of handling an emergency situation by themselves because of their lack of experience in caring for critical patients. However they felt that the residents would be safe in their practice, because the PACU is a well supported environment.
- A pre-survey of the preceptors was not offered prior to the residents beginning this program. Some answers to preceptors survey may have been directed more towards having new grads in the PACU versus how these specific residents increased in knowledge through a PACU residency program.
- “I want to say that they ALL have done a wonderful job!!! I’ve never heard anyone complain about busy days and they all ask appropriate questions. I think they ALL are very smart and have blended into the unit as new nurses much better than I had initially thought that they would. I am impressed by them all and their work ethic!” Preceptor Survey
- The residents “attitude and exuberance seemed to rekindle desire for all of us to be better nurses.” Preceptor Survey
- “Have been very impressed by their overall confidence and knowledge in the PACU compared to “newbies” in the past.”

IMPLICATIONS

- Future surveys should include the clinical experience of the preceptors.
- More training and education of preceptors about the PACU program.
- Surveys show increase in knowledge through the program and overall gaining in trust of the preceptors in comparison to those not in similar program.