Developing a New PACU Overnight Extended Recovery Unit (ERU) Unit Through Mentorship and Empowerment

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Background

• 171-bed community, Magnet®, teaching hospital that is part of a large integrated health system sought creative solutions to rising capacity issues.

• Leadership decision made to create a new Extended Recovery Unit (ERU) for the post-surgical population.

• Goal to build an accelerated discharge pathway for clinically appropriate patients without utilizing inpatient space.

• Under the mentorship of an experienced clinical leader a group of staff was formed to operationalize the unit.

Purpose

• Develop a staffing model, a patient care checklist, and enhanced the environment of care to support efficiency, patient safety, and patient experience.

Process

Group Forming:
Formation of a work group. Individual peer mentorship led by unit Clinical Leader and group collaboration to outline, assign, and prepare for distinct roles within the unit.

Review of evidence:
Review of outcomes from a previous ERU pilot, pertinent literature, ASPAN professional society guidelines, and lessons learned from a sister institution.

Collaboration:
Collaboration with interdisciplinary team members and the Patient and Family Advisory Committee and Patient and Family Relations to help enhance the environment of care for ERU patients.

Tools:
Microsoft Teams site was central electronic resource used for communication and resources.

Result:
ERU successfully caring for up to 5 patients each night with average discharge time before 9:30am, <13% rate of transition to inpatient space, no OR hold associated with ERU and high patient satisfaction scores.

Statement of Successful Practice:

• The Perianesthesia PACU ERU team, supported by clinical leader mentorship, demonstrated a high level of autonomy in building a staffing model, environment of care enhancements, and care checklists to successfully open a new PACU ERU.

Implications for Advancing Practice:

• Staff empowerment, collaboration, and mentorship using an evidence-based approach can be a formidable instrument in building new care processes. This can contribute significantly to efficiency for hospitals and safe, excellent care for patients.