

Lessons Learned: Listening to the Interns

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Lessons Learned: Listening to the Interns

Perioperative Services

Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Background:

Educating a new generation of Perioperative Registered Nurses presents a multitude of challenges. With an average age of perioperative nurses within network of 47, the need to educate and retain skilled nurses for our Operating Rooms is paramount.

Opportunity for Improvement:

In reviewing the internship program in place, a revision of the curriculum was necessary. Periop 101: A Core Curriculum provides a comprehensive educational package for the 24 week OR Internship. These modules were incorporated into the curriculum of classroom lectures and clinical experience.

Four Generations in the Workplace:

Currently there are four generations of nurses in the workplace creating obstacles to learning if orientation programs are not periodically evaluated and improved. Recognizing the different learning styles and approaches to learning within each generational group allows for an effective and engaging learning process. Too many nurses are stuck on the old addage, “ see one, do one, teach one”.

With the complexity of the technology driven OR of today, it is impossible to place these unrealistic expectations upon our new nurses. The ultimate goal is to introduce and mentor a new generation of nurses to the Operating Room.

- **Veterans** – Just get it done
- **Baby Boomers** - Work ‘til you drop, “Live to work”
- **Generation X** - If it’s not broke, don’t fix it
- **Generation Y (Millennial)** - Technology driven - Need constant feedback “Work to live”



Evaluation:

New Strategies for an Effective and Engaging Learning Process

- More time in the observation role prior to performing in the OR
- Mock Set-up – simulation of OR clinical experience – a time to practice with discussion and real time feedback
- Introduction of basic skills checklist for initial 4 week clinical experience
- Continual communication between preceptor and intern – define expectations and assess performance
- Consistency in preceptors from day to day – 1:1 intern to preceptor when possible
- Introduction of standardized set-ups within each specialty
- Filming specialty lectures for easy access to review that specialty
- Use of intranet site to share resources such as videos of different types of surgeries for use in preparation and review

INTERNS:	Date:
Basic Skills	
Gowning and Gloving self	
Gowning and Gloving other	
Abdominal Prep	
Vaginal Prep	
Extremity Prep	
Back Table set-up	
Mayo stand set-up	
Passing Instruments	
Complete Ticket	
Positioning patient	
Apply Bovie Pad	
Counts	
Foley Catheter Insertion	
Report to PACU	
Preceptor: _____	Preceptor: _____
Preceptor: _____	Preceptor: _____
Preceptor: _____	Preceptor: _____



Outcomes and Implications:

January 2011 to December 2011, 20 new OR-RNs completed the 24 week internship. A new class of 9 RNs began in January 2012 and another class is scheduled for July 2012. Data collection is ongoing on the retention of these RNs and their participation in unit wide committees and leadership roles.