



New Graduates are Changing Trends in Operating Room Traffic

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Abstract

The Jefferson College of Nursing (JCN) is affiliated with Thomas Jefferson University Hospital (TJUH), which is one of the top-ranked hospitals in the nation. TJUH is recognized by the American Nurses Credentialing Center as a Magnet[®] hospital for quality patient care, nursing excellence, and innovations in professional nursing practice. Since JCN is an integral part of Jefferson's premier academic health center, it is imperative that the two entities maintain a partnership in clinical care education. JCN offers a concept based curriculum which promotes practice excellence, innovation, population health, and interprofessional collaboration. The innovative curriculum offers senior learners a selective immersion in which students can now request the perioperative department as a rotational site. Having this unique opportunity for seven weeks challenges students to collaborate with leadership and staff in the perioperative environment and promotes professional interactions in an otherwise unfamiliar department. Additionally, entering the perioperative environment is the perfect setting to observe quality, safety, communication, and stimulate clinical reasoning amongst a very vulnerable patient population. For those students whose interests were peaked or career paths confirmed, joining the perioperative team as a new graduate begins with the innovative program at JCN then continues with the hospital sponsored perioperative 101 class and nurse residency program. Exposure to procedural areas is minimal at best for most nursing programs and having the perioperative department as part of JCN's selective immersion will not only benefit our graduates, it will also help support nursing stability for an otherwise hard to staff specialty division.

Key words: Nurse Graduates, Operating Room

Background

Jefferson College of Nursing (JCN) is continuing to honor tradition and ignite innovation [5]. Our vision welcomes nursing students to the new era of Jefferson College of Nursing where we are reimagining, transforming, and disrupting the way nurses lead and impact society [5]. JCN supports a traditional Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) program and a full-time accelerated 1-year and 2-year BSN program. The selective seven week immersion program occurs during the last semester of clinical rotations, and the students are placed in specialty areas such as the perioperative department. Prior to this program the

perioperative department was considered an unfamiliar area for nursing students, and many stated that they were not really sure what the role of a perioperative nurse was. In addition, if students spent time within the perioperative environment, it would help to recruit and retain emerging graduates to bridge the gap in the current staffing shortage.

Selective Immersion Program

The perioperative selective immersion focuses on perioperative nursing in the ambulatory short procedure unit (ASU), operating room (OR), and post anesthesia unit (PACU). During the first selective immersion program 63 students out of 127 enrolled in the JCN program requested to participate in the perioperative selective immersion. The perioperative rotation expands the student's knowledge in assessment, clinical reasoning, infection control, problem solving, interprofessional collaboration, professionalism, patient teaching, and most importantly patient safety. In addition, students entering the perioperative selective immersion have had the opportunity to learn how to scrub, don sterile gowns and gloves, and learn basic surgical instruments.

The program is facilitated by a clinical instructor with a strong perioperative background, the OR clinical educator and the perioperative staff. Since the development of the program in 2017, the goal has been to work together as a team to provide an optimal educational perioperative nursing experience for the senior nursing student. Consequently, there have been many benefits from the selective immersion program which have complimented both JCN and TJUH.

Recently published researched has brought to light an alarming anticipated nursing shortage in the perioperative area. At present fifty six percent of nursing leaders report that they are already having problems with recruitment [1]. The perioperative nursing workforce on average is older than that in any other specialty area and nearest to retirement [3,4]. That certainly explains the ongoing loss of nurses from the perioperative area, with an estimated twenty percent expected to retire in the next five years [2]. Sixty eight percent of perioperative departments anticipate staffing problems within 5 years based on the age of their current staff [1]. The future need for nurses in the perioperative area combined with the interest of the students at JCN, further solidified the partnership between the two organizations.

Conclusion

Both organizations are committed to the success of the selective immersion program as it provides numerous benefits for both JCN students and the TJUH enterprise. Since the introduction of the program, six students were hired directly into the operating room at TJUH and two students were hired by other healthcare systems. Students who are hired from the perioperative selective immersion program require less orientation, and are capable of being placed on more complex surgical teams. Most importantly the author has been offered information from previous perioperative selective students that report being very happy in the nursing profession and their career choice. Having the selective immersion program has been an asset to JCN's students, the TJUH enterprise and the nursing profession.

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