HLTEN612A

Practise in the perioperative nursing environment

Version 1.0

Flexible Learning Resource

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TOPIC 1  Multi-disciplinary perioperative team

Introduction to perioperative nursing/philosophical framework

Perioperative nursing encompasses the delivery of client care in the preoperative, intraoperative and post-operative periods of the client’s surgical experience. Perioperative nursing is recognised and practised in surgical suites, day only surgery centres, endoscopy suites and specialised centres.

Using the framework of the nursing process, the perioperative nurse:

- assesses the client – collecting, organising and prioritising client data
- establishes nursing diagnoses
- identifies desired client outcomes
- develops and implements a plan of nursing care
- evaluates that care in terms of outcomes achieved by the client.

The perioperative nurse requires a knowledge of surgical anatomy, physiological changes, their consequences for the client, intraoperative risk factors, potentials for client injury and the means of preventing them, and psychosocial implications for the client and significant others. This knowledge enables the perioperative nurse to anticipate needs of the client and surgical team and rapidly initiate appropriate nursing interventions (Rothrock 2003, p.1).

In performing these activities, the perioperative nurse acts as the client’s advocate and collaborates with other health care professionals in the perioperative team.

For those nurses or other health professionals who have not previously worked in the perioperative environment, it can be challenging to work in a unit which has restricted entry to other staff. It is a unique environment. The perioperative environment can be quite stressful as a work environment and it requires that staff receive adequate emotional support. Events or situations which can cause increased stress levels include unexpected deaths, multiple trauma, radical and/or destructive surgery, technology overload, staff shortages/staff changeover/inadequate skill mix, restructures, budget constraints, ineffective communication and workplace bullying and harassment (ACORN Standards 2008).

Australian College of Operative Room Nurses (ACORN) represents the professional interests of the perioperative nurse in Australia and their mission is to promote excellence in perioperative nursing care. ACORN has developed a set of Standards which provides nurse in the perioperative environment with guidelines. The standards utilise evidence based practice and expert knowledge.

Working in a team

ACTIVITY 1

Using the internet or a relevant textbook answer the following:

Provide your own definition of a team.
ACTIVITY 2

Access the following website and read about leadership teams and answer the following question:

www.nsba.org/sbot/toolkit/LeadTeams.html

What are the characteristics of a good team?

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Read the following about characteristics of a good team member.

- Works for consensus on decisions.
- Shares openly and authentically with others regarding personal feelings, opinions, thoughts, and perceptions about problems and conditions.
- Involves others in the decision-making process
- Trusts, supports, and has genuine concern for other team members.
- ‘Owns’ problems rather than blaming them on others.
- When listening, attempts to hear and interpret communication from other’s points of view.
- Influences others by involving them in the issue(s).
- Encourages the development of other team members.
- Respects and is tolerant of individual differences.
- Acknowledges and works through conflict openly.
- Considers and uses new ideas and suggestions from others.
- Encourages feedback on own behaviour.
- Understands and is committed to team objectives.
- Does not engage in win/lose activities with other team members.
- Has skills in understanding what is going on in the group.

http://www.innovativeteambuilding.co.uk
ACTIVITY 3

Answer the following questions.

1. Do you have the characteristics of a good team member?
2. Highlight the characteristics you feel you possess.
3. Are there any characteristics that are not mentioned that you feel would make a good team member.
4. Reflect on those characteristics that you do not possess and how you feel you can achieve these.

Team nursing responds to the needs of both the client and the staff. Team members are stimulated by the team leader to learn and develop new skills. The team leader instructs the team members, supervises them and provides assignments that offer them potential for growth.

The following facts define team nursing. Team nursing:
- is direct client care accomplished by a specific group of nurses and allied health care workers
- is accomplished by using the nursing process
- allows for comprehensive, holistic nursing care when the team functions at a high level of efficiency
- is composed of a team leader who coordinates client care and supervises team members, and team members who are responsible for total care given to an assigned group or number of clients
- requires cooperation and effective communication with all staff members.

Operating room team members

ACTIVITY 4

Using a recent perioperative text or the current ACORN Standards for Perioperative Nursing complete the following.

The following site may also be useful
http://www.acorn.org.au/content/view/102/83/

1. Differentiate between the roles of an enrolled nurse and registered nurse in operating theatres.

   a) Enrolled nurse

   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________

   b) Registered nurse

   ____________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________
2. For the following list of health care professionals, indicate their role and responsibilities in the perioperative team.

a) anaesthetic nurse
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

b) anaesthetist
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

c) circulating (scout) nurse
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

d) scrub nurse
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

e) surgeon
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

f) surgical assistant
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

g) post anaesthetic unit (recovery) nurse
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
Other classifications of staff involved in the operating theatre are known as the support staff.

3. Identify three support staff members and describe their role:

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Group dynamics and relationships

Groups or teams are formed for various reasons, such as for completion of specific projects, committees and work groups. When you are completing a course you will find that your class becomes a group/team and that groups/teams may form within that group. The healthcare worker through the course of his/her duties will be involved in many groups/teams and needs to understand group dynamics.

All health care workers in operating theatres form part of the perioperative team. Cooperation between all members is vitally important for the efficient operation of the unit. Within the operating theatres there are many sub-teams that health workers belong to especially nursing staff. Although nurses are part of a nursing team as they are in any other unit/ward, they can also belong to the pre-operative client assessment/education team, anaesthetic team, surgical team or recovery team. Although nurses may not be part of the technical support team which includes the sterilisation team, they need to be very aware of how they function, and support the rest of the team members. Most operating theatre units would have a cleaning team for major cleaning; however, between cases nurses also assist in maintaining the cleanliness of the theatre mindful of the infection control standards in place.

No matter what the team, to ensure its effective functioning communication is important. This is achieved in various ways such as memos, formal team meetings or informal meetings.

It is important to clarify the purpose of group/team meetings and ascertain the role of members of the group/team. Nurses may be asked to lead perioperative group/team meetings and therefore need to be aware of meeting procedures for formal meetings. Minutes or action plans are important following formal meetings.

Nurses must be aware of the importance of using good communication techniques which ensure that all members of the group/team have an opportunity to express their opinion and the nurse has a responsibility to listen to the points of view expressed by others in the group/team.

Conflict can be interpersonal or intrapersonal. That is, it can be within you or between you and another person. Conflict between individuals is often seen as personality differences, but it can be role related. Conflict management becomes a part of managing group dynamics therefore it is important to understand how to deal with conflict.