

# Portfolio of practice Peri-operative care handout

## Year 3, Activity 12

### Making the most of your theatre experience

The aim of this handout is to provide an understanding of the patient's journey within the operating department.

To do this, you will be able to observe and discuss how the patient is cared for during this time and identify the evidence-based care that is delivered to each individual patient.

You will be able to identify and describe the various roles within the team to understand that patient interaction and communication is essential and teamwork within the operating theatre is fundamental to the delivery of best practice and positive outcomes for the patient.

This will allow you to achieve outcome 12 in your Portfolio, which requires you to demonstrate outcome 2.15 (NMC), to contribute to the application of a range of interventions which support and optimise the health and well-being of patients and clients (Care Delivery Domain) and outcome 2.16 (NMC), to demonstrate the safe application of the skills required to meet the needs of patients and clients within the current sphere of practice (Care Delivery Domain).

..... **During your theatre experience observe staff in the reception area and/or anaesthetic room and make notes about the following:**

- How staff receive patients into the operating department and prepare them for the operation
- The type of information that is exchanged between ward staff and theatre staff
- Ways in which the patient is involved in the exchange of information
- How staff provide emotional support and meet the different cultural needs of patients
- How any difficulties or incidents (e.g. consent form not signed) are managed





Define what anaesthesia means and the difference between a general anaesthetic (GA), a regional block (e.g. spinal, epidural or nerve block) and a local anaesthetic.

**Whilst on placement in theatres observe the following and discuss with your mentor:**

1. How does the scrub nurse ensure that no swabs or instruments are left inside the patient?
2. How is the patient's body temperature maintained during surgery?
3. What measures are taken to maintain patient's privacy and dignity
4. What measures are taken to prevent patient's developing:
  - a) pressures ulcers &
  - b) DVT
5. What happens to specimens taken in theatre?
6. How is the patient's fluid balance measured and maintained during surgery?
7. What special measures are used to prevent infection and cross infection?
8. How does the hand scrubbing procedure differ from the hand washing procedure used in wards?



## Types of operation

During your theatre experience you are likely to see lots of different surgical procedures. Make a note of all the different operations you see and what the procedure involves.



## In the Recovery Room

During your theatre experience, ask if you can spend some time with the nurses in the Recovery Room and observe and discuss how they do the following:



- Communicate with the patients
- Assess the patient's level of consciousness
- Monitor respirations
- Cardiovascular monitoring
- Pain assessment and pain management
- Documentation and care plans

## References and further reading:

Aitkenhead, A, Rowbotham, D and Smith, G (2001) *Textbook of Anaesthesia*. London: Churchill Livingstone.

Brooker, C and Nicol, M (eds) (2003) *Nursing Adults: The Practice of Caring*. Edinburgh: Mosby.

Hatfield, A and Tronson, M (2001) *The Complete Recovery Book*.(3<sup>rd</sup> ed) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oshodi, T (2004) Clinical Skills: An Evidence-Based Approach to Perioperative Fasting. *British Journal of Nursing*, 13 (16) 958-962.

Pudner, R (ed) (2005) *Nursing the Surgical Patient* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Bailliere Tindall: London

Walker, L and Lamont, S (2007) Use and application of graduated elastic compression stockings. *Nursing Standard*. 21 (42) 41-45

Wicker, P and O Neill, J (2006) *Caring for the Peri-operative Patient*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

Woodhead, K and Wicker, P (2005) *A Textbook of Peri-operative Care*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) London: Churchill Livingstone