

AORN Position Statement on the Value of the Perioperative Nurse Educator

POSITION STATEMENT

AORN believes the perioperative nurse educator:

- Fosters excellence in perioperative nursing care delivery through education, preceptorship, mentorship, and implementation of evidence-based practice.
- Promotes and implements the National League for Nursing *Nurse Educator Core Competencies*¹ and the AORN *Standards of Perioperative Nursing*.²
- Is a respected leader and serves an essential role in the perioperative environment.
- Is vital to the safety and quality of the perioperative profession.
- Enhances the workplace flow by undertaking educational, clinical, and leadership responsibilities within the perioperative environment.
- Promotes interdisciplinary collaboration and team communication.³
- Is essential to quality improvement efforts in the perioperative setting.
- Should be provided with time and resources to meet the needs for comprehensive education of each member of the perioperative team, including, but not limited to, initial onboarding, annual competency verification, and in-service programs about new equipment or processes.
- Commits to life-long learning, advancing formal education and achieving certifications in specialty areas.

RATIONALE

The Institute of Medicine recommends specialized education to prepare registered nurses (RNs) who are transitioning to advanced settings, such as the perioperative specialty.^{3,4} The perioperative nurse educator provides a safe learning environment for the RN new to the perioperative setting through delivery of evidence-based didactic learning opportunities, effective preceptorships, new graduate perioperative nurse residencies, and fellowship programs.

The perioperative nurse educator guides and supports both experienced RNs and RNs new to the perioperative environment through the onboarding experience and beyond by serving as a resource, assessing competencies, and providing lifelong learning and professional development opportunities. The perioperative nurse educator is essential in promoting interdisciplinary collaboration and communication by including these topics in both onboarding and ongoing education programs.

Additionally, this educator serves as a trusted patient advocate by promoting safe and evidence-based best practices (eg, AORN *Guidelines for Perioperative Practice*, The Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goals, and Quality and Safety Education for Nurses [QSEN]) to reduce the risk of adverse patient and personnel events (eg, medication errors, surgical site infections, retained surgical items, needle stick injuries) and to promote optimal patient outcomes.

REFERENCES

1. Halstead JA, ed. *NLN Core Competencies for Nurse Educators: A Decade of Influence*. Washington, DC: Wolters Kluwer Health; 2018.
2. *Standards of Perioperative Nursing*. AORN, Inc. <https://www.aorn.org/guidelines/clinical-resources/aorn-standards>. Published January 2015. Accessed December 17, 2020.
3. Mower J. Transitioning from perioperative staff nurse to perioperative educator. *AORN J*. 2017;106(2):111-112.
4. Institute of Medicine Committee on the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing, at the Institute of Medicine. *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press; 2011.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Guidelines for Perioperative Practice. Denver, CO: AORN, Inc; 2021.

The Joint Commission. National Patient Safety Goals Effective January 2021 for the Hospital Program. https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/standards/national-patient-safety-goals/2021/hap_npsg_jan2021.pdf. Accessed April 29, 2021.

Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN). QSEN Institute. Frances Payne Boyton School of Nursing. Case Western Reserve University. <https://qsen.org/>. Accessed April 29, 2021.

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