AORN Position Statement on Perioperative Registered Nurse Residency Programs

POSITION STATEMENT

AORN believes:

- Perioperative registered nurse (RN) residency programs are essential to assist in decreasing the theory-practice gap and increasing confidence, knowledge, and competence; professional interdisciplinary communication; and RN retention rates.

- New graduate RNs and RNs transferring from other units to the perioperative area should participate in a nurse residency program (ie, a formal, transition-to-practice program).

- Nurse residency programs/courses for perioperative RNs should include programs/courses that are based on the current version of the AORN *Guidelines for Perioperative Practice*.

- The perioperative RN residency program duration can range from 6 months to 1 year. Program duration may be influenced or determined by factors such as geographical location (rural versus urban) and size of the institution.

- Perioperative RN residency programs should include formal preceptor education, training, and evaluation.

- Mentorship is an integral part of a perioperative RN residency program.

- Nurse residency programs should strive to become accredited by the Practice Transition Accreditation Program through the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

RATIONALE

- The rationale for this position statement is based on evidence in the current nursing literature; recommendations from the 2010 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report *The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health*; and alignment with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Recommendations and with Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN).[1-3]

- The 2010 IOM report emphasized the importance of RNs practicing to the full extent of their education and training and the importance of providing education and support to assist new graduate RNs as they make the transition to professional nurse.[1]

- The NCSBN recommends the support of well-structured, individualized transition-to-practice programs for the new graduate RN and also for the RN transitioning into a critical care area or specialty area.[2]

- Periop 101: A Core Curriculum™ is a comprehensive, blended educational program for perioperative RNs (eg, new graduate RNs and nurses transferring from other nursing units). This program

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combines a standardized, evidence-based online curriculum and textbook readings with hands-on skills labs and a clinical practicum. The program curriculum includes *Guidelines for Perioperative Practice*, other evidence-based content, and the graduate-level QSEN competencies.[4]

- Nurse residency programs lead to increased job satisfaction, increased critical thinking skills, and decreased turnover rates for RNs and provide cost savings to health care organizations.[5-9]

- Nurse residency programs lead to improved nursing practice, increased clinical competence, and improved time management and leadership skills.[5-9]

- Nurse residency programs improve communication and collaboration skills.[5-9]

Glossary

Mentorship: "Mentorship is a strategy that can be used to successfully socialize nurses to practice; prepare them for the professional expectations of the discipline; boost confidence; and provide for personal, professional, and intellectual growth and development. Mentors are experienced perioperative nurses who can help novice nurses and nurses new to the perioperative specialty to navigate and thrive in clinical practice, management roles, and leadership opportunities. Mentoring relationships focus on personal and professional growth. This is different than a preceptorship, which is a short-term association during which specific goals, typically related to unit or specialty orientation, are achieved."[10]

Nurse residency program: A program that is designed for RNs within an institution, with classes that target the development of clinical skills and professional skills (eg, communication, collaboration, synthesis, planning, and evaluation). Nurse residency programs are also known as "transition-to-practice" programs.

Perioperative registered nurse residency program: A program that is designed for new perioperative RNs (eg, new graduate, unit RN transferring to the perioperative area) within an institution and that uses Periop 101: A Core Curriculum™, with classes that target development of clinical skills, professional skills, interdisciplinary communication, collaboration, synthesis, planning, and evaluation.

Preceptor: A competent RN who has received formal training for the preceptor role.

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Additional Resources

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Publication History

Original approved by the membership: March 2019
Revision approved by the membership: June 2021
Reaffirmed by the Board of Directors: March 2026
Sunset Review: 2031

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