

# A Nontraditional Approach to Delivering the PeriOperative 101 Program

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## Background

Perioperative nurse leaders from a large health system in Eastern North Carolina identified the need to extend the AORN PeriOp 101 program beyond the main Medical Center to encompass seven regional hospitals.

Leaders within the regional hospitals were unfamiliar with how the PeriOp 101 program was structured but they knew they wanted to try it. After reviewing the program through AORN and learning what the orientation path for the new nurse in the operating room could look like, a proposal to the Professional Development leadership team was developed.

## Assessment

Spring of 2024 a learning needs assessment was performed at the regional hospitals to determine which facility had nurses who were formally trained with the PeriOp 101 program. At most, each facility had two to three nurses who had received the program. Additionally, some nurse leaders lacked formal experience working in the operating room, placing them at a disadvantage when onboarding new staff.

Projected current needs and hiring were determined. In November 2024, the PeriOp 101 program and CineMed videos were purchased for 40 learners across the region.

Immediately, two limitations were identified with the plan.

- There was no formal educator to administer the program.
- Some of the learners were already in staffing and had been employed for over two years. Getting them out of staffing would be a challenge.

## Implementation

The system Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) was determined to be the administrator for the program, having access to all regional hospitals.

- January 2025 the first cohort started with 13 nurses at five hospitals.
  - Seven learners had less than six months of experience, while six had more than a year, some with over three years of experience.

Instead of delivering the program in a recommended method of having the didactics delivered within the first two months, a nontraditional approach was taken due to nurses already in staffing.

- The program was delivered with one set of modules assigned every two weeks for a period of 24 weeks.
- Leading to only having two final weeks for review and preparation for the final exam.

The CNS relied heavily on a staff nurse at each facility to help ensure the learners stayed on task.

| Week 1     | PeriOp 101 Modules and Skills Checkoffs  | CineMed Videos   | eGuidelines/Guideline Essentials   | Additional Reading/Resources   | Available Office Hours (for Teams meetings)  |
|------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1/6 – 1/10 | This week you will register for PeriOp 101 if you have not already done so and start to navigate your way around the AORN website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P101 OR Reading and Video Resources</li> <li>• Introduction to QSEN</li> <li>• Professionalism</li> <li>• Organizational Influences and Outcomes</li> </ul> Skills Checkoffs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul> | This week you will register for the CineMed videos if you have not already done so and start to navigate your way around the CineMed website <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professionalism Videos                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team Communication</li> <li>• Psychosocial Safety in Perioperative Practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organizational Influences and Outcomes Videos                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's More Than a Procedure: Patient Concerns About the Surgical Experience</li> <li>• Workplace Safety</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | Professionalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the AORN Guidelines for Perioperative Practice</li> </ul> Organizational Influences and Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team Communication</li> </ul> Your focus this week in the Operating Room will be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay special attention to communication among team members</li> <li>• Pay special attention to any potential safety hazards in the surgical environment</li> </ul> | Refer to your hospitals Policy and Procedure documents for each module<br><br>Optional Reading from Alexanders's Book <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professionalism                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapter 1: Concepts Basic to Perioperative Nursing                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Pages 9-14 (Institutional Standards of Care to Key Points)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Organizational Influences and Outcomes                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Chapter 2: Patient Safety and Risk Management                                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Pages 16-24 (Beginning of the chapter to Unintended Retention of Foreign Objects)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li></ul> | Refer to any additional PowerPoints and/or Journal Articles if provided<br><br>For any questions/ additional conversations, open time will be provided during: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuesday, 1/7, 2-4pm</li> <li>• Thursday, 1/9, 2-4pm</li> </ul> You do not have to call in at this time, but this is the time I will set aside and be available for any personal/group needs. |

This demonstrates an example of what the first 2 weeks would look like.

## Acknowledgements

All system PeriOp leaders, nurse extenders, PeriOp 101 nurses and the Professional Development team for the Medical Center Operating Room.

## Discussion and Outcomes

One nurse resigned three months into the program. June 2025, the other 12 nurses successfully completed the program with an average score of 95.25% on the final exam. In a post survey eight nurses were extremely satisfied while four nurses were somewhat satisfied with the program.

Leading comments were

- A greater emphasis on instructor-led teaching was desired
- Due to having biased experience, it was tough to adopt best practice from previous training
- Learners had a better understanding of rational
- Instructional videos were redundant
- Seasoned nurses should be provided this training
- A common concern was limited time for completing modules due to staffing responsibilities.

4 more cohorts of the PeriOp 101 class have since been established

- June 2025 – 3 students
  - All 3 passed the final exam with an average score of 85%
  - 2 RN's resigned immediately after completion of the program
- July 2025 – 3 students
  - 1 RN resigned have way through
  - The remainder 2 RN's passed with an average of 95%
- October 2025 – 4 students
  - Pending completion in April 2026
- January 2026 – 6 students

One big limitation identified was the CNS's inability to routinely travel to all facilities, which reduced opportunities for skills checkoffs and hands-on training. The future of the system-based program is up for discussion.

## Implications for PeriOperative Nursing

Findings from the initial PeriOp 101 cohort revealed that the program offers valuable benefits not only for new nurses but also for those with several years of experience in the operating room. Other system-based organizations with smaller regional hospitals could benefit from a nontraditional approach such as this but a dedicated nurse educator should to be on site for delivery of the program.