

For Immediate Release

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Certified Nurses Contributing to Safety in the OR

According to a recently published study in the Journal of the Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses, hospitals with high rates of specialty nursing certifications have fewer surgical infections.

The study found that a ten percent increase of CNOR (certified nurse operating room) credentials and other support certified nurses resulted in an 8-16 percent reduction in surgical infections.

According to **Anne Creighton-Hedges, MS, BSN, RN**, director of nursing for Perioperative Services at Kenmore Mercy, thirteen of the hospital's nurses currently have CNOR certification. That's fifty percent. "Very few surgical departments across the county, regardless of their size, have a staff where a majority of the registered nurses earn their CNOR certification," she noted.

This specialty certification enhances patient safety in healthcare by validating that practice is consistent with standards of excellence. Perioperative nurses face a challenging environment in the operating room and must keep up with the continual evolution of technology and implications to their professional practice. Noteworthy trends seen at Kenmore Mercy Hospital include minimally invasive and robotic surgery.

"All of our perioperative nurses are committed to providing the highest quality care to their surgical patients. With CNOR certification, they have a greater confidence in their practice," added Creighton-Hedges.

To be eligible for CNOR certification, registered nurses must be currently working in perioperative nursing in the area of nursing education, administration, research or clinical practice. They are further required to have completed a minimum of two years and 2,400 hours of experience in perioperative nursing, with a minimum of 50 percent in the intraoperative setting. Once they achieve these requirements they can sit for a 200-multiple choice examination that covers nine related subject areas.

"We encourage a culture of excellence for all of our Kenmore Mercy Hospital's nurses. Certification enhances overall nursing practice and research shows that certified nurses are positively affecting patient safety and outcomes," added **Heather Telford, MS, BSN, CEN, NEA-BC**, Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Care Service.

In addition to its above average number CNOR certifications, more than 20 percent of Kenmore Mercy's nurses hold specialty certifications. For Magnet-recognized hospitals like Kenmore Mercy, this greater percentage of certified staff nurses is required.

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