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ESTHER M. JOHNSTONE, DNP, MSN, RN, CNOR

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Purpose/Goal

To provide the learner with knowledge of AORN's guidelines related to heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems in the OR; air changes and positive pressure; product selection; entry into practice; and mentoring in perioperative nursing.

Objectives

1. Discuss practices that could jeopardize safety in the perioperative area.
2. Discuss common areas of concern that relate to perioperative best practices.
3. Describe implementation of evidence-based practice in relation to perioperative nursing care.

Accreditation

AORN is accredited with distinction as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Approvals

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Conflict-of-Interest Disclosures

Esther M. Johnstone, DNP, MSN, RN, CNOR, has no declared affiliation that could be perceived as posing a potential conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

The behavioral objectives for this program were created by Helen Starbuck Pashley, MA, BSN, CNOR, clinical editor, with consultation from Susan Bakewell, MS, RN-BC, director, Perioperative Education. Ms Starbuck Pashley and Ms Bakewell have no declared affiliations that could be perceived as posing potential conflicts of interest in the publication of this article.

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THIS MONTH

Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems in the OR

Key words: *airborne contaminants, HVAC system, air pressure, air quality, temperature and humidity.*

Air changes and positive pressure

Key words: *air changes, positive pressure airflow, unidirectional airflow, outdoor air, recirculated air.*

Product selection

Key word: *product evaluation, product selection, selection committee.*

Entry into practice

Key words: *associate degree in nursing, bachelor of science in nursing, entry-level position, advanced education, BSN-prepared RNs.*

Mentoring in perioperative nursing

Key words: *mentor, novice, practice improvement, nursing workforce.*

Heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems in the OR

QUESTION:

What is the purpose of the heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system in an OR?

ANSWER:

The purpose of the HVAC system is to reduce the amount of environmental contaminants (eg, microbes, dust, lint) in the

OR.¹ The HVAC system controls the air pressure, air quality, humidity, and temperature of the OR in comparison with those of the surrounding areas.¹ According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC),² a centralized HVAC system includes engineering and general ventilation controls to prevent the spread of airborne

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