



South Western Sydney  
Local Health District



# PACU Nurse: **Advanced Beginner** Professional Development Pathway

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## Introduction

- The Professional Development Pathway for PACU Advanced beginner (the Pathway) encompasses skill and knowledge development activities to support current, acting or aspiring PACU Nurse Advanced Beginner.
- The Pathway has been designed to support and provide a structured development plan, agreed upon between staff and their manager. It can be used as a resource to promote regular conversations as the staff member progresses through the Pathway and develops their knowledge, skills and capabilities. The Pathway can form part of the Performance Development Review cycle.
- The Pathway also supports Succession Planning initiatives which may contribute to Recognition Prior Learning (RPL) for some elements.
- The Pathway begins with an undertaking between the line manager and the staff member to set goals, agree on timeframes and to ensure that the staff member has the operational support to succeed.
- The Pathway then moves on to a suite of overarching professional development activities related to the PACU Nurse Advanced Beginner. This then progresses to the specific activities designed to guide the staff members development in PACU Nurse Advanced Beginner specific areas of their role.

## Transforming Your Experience

The Pathway supports Focus Area 4. Effective Leadership and Empowered Staff in the Transforming Your Experience (TYE) Implementation plan 2017-2023 and provides a framework for staff members to develop skills and achieve their full potential.

## Target audience

Current, acting, or aspiring PACU Nurses (4-12 months).

## Purpose

The purpose of the Pathway is to support career progression and succession planning as well as serve as a resource to guide professional development.

## Learning outcomes

It is expected that by working through the Pathway that the staff member will be able to

- perform the requirements of the position identified as part of the professional learning pathway.
- act as a mentor for others.
- contribute to the development of their service or specialty.
- advocate for nursing and or midwifery.
- contribute to the body of knowledge for their service or specialty.
- show evidence of professional development in career pathway.

## References

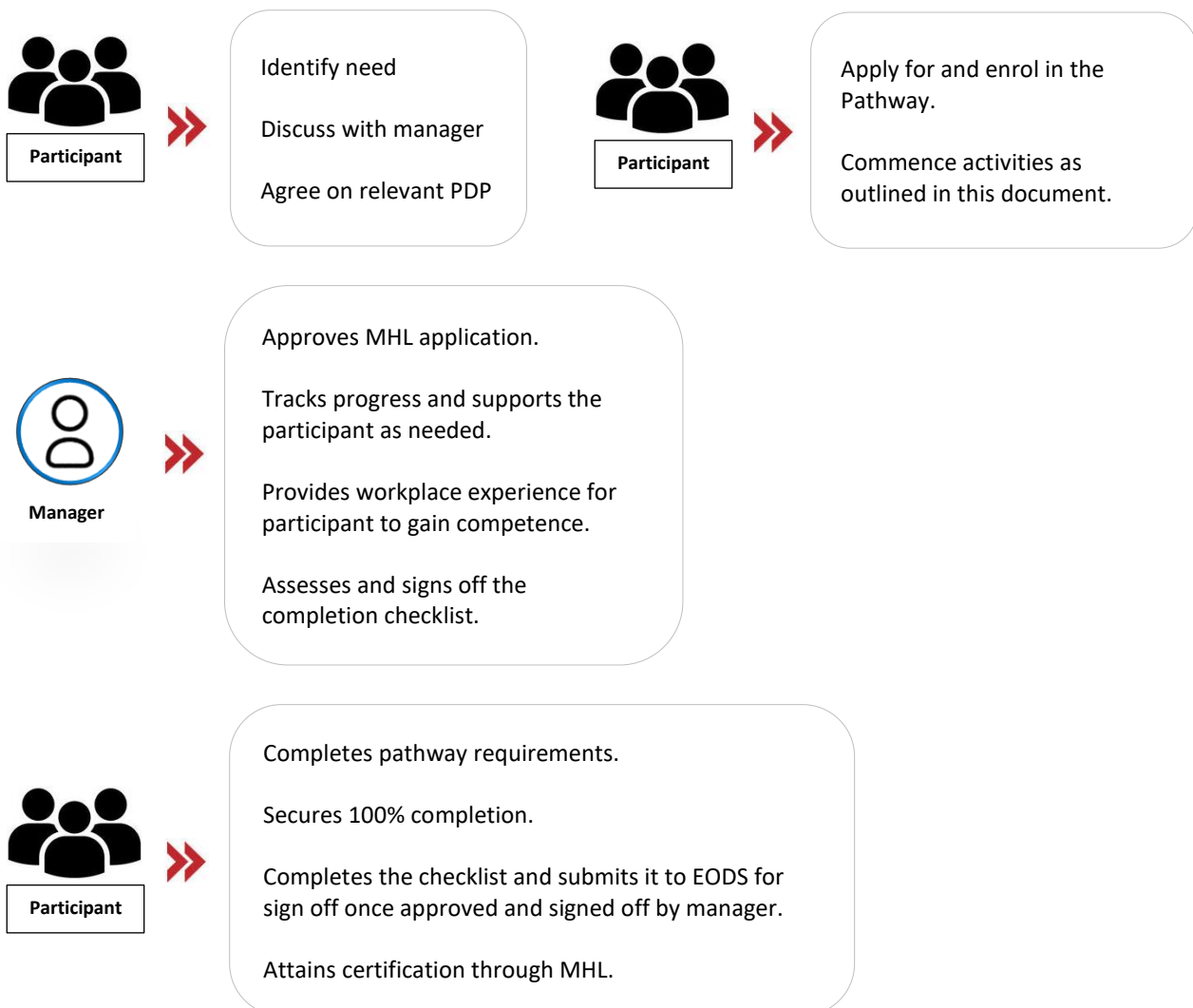
- SWSLHD Workforce Plan 2022-2028 (in DRAFT)
- SWSLHD Nursing and Midwifery Succession Planning Framework 2021

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## Application, Enrolment and Completion processes

1. Staff member or manager identify need, discuss and come to an agreement about the Pathway that would best suit professional development needs.
2. Staff member applies for the pathway through MHL. Manager approves. Staff member is enrolled.
3. Staff member progresses through the pathway.
4. At the end of each section, the manager reviews progress within the section with the staff member and ensures all activities are completed before the participant progresses to the next section within the pathway.
5. The Assignment Completion Checklist is completed and submitted to the Education and Organisational Development Service for sign off.
6. 100% completion is required within the pathway.
7. Upon 100% completion, the pathway will automatically generate a certificate of completion which will be visible and accessible through the staff member's transcript.

The above steps are also demonstrated through the following workflow diagram.



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## **My Health Learning**

The Pathway has been compiled in My Health Learning (MHL) for participants to easily access all requirements and track their own progress.

Managers and their delegates can track participants' progress in the pathway through MHL.

Each section includes online modules, classroom courses, external learning activities, operational assessments and assignments. A complete list of items is provided in following pages.

Each section of the pathway is listed separately to make it easy for participants to understand the requirements for each section and the number of activities that are required to be completed.

Managers, their delegates and/or the Preceptors are required to mark off the Operational Assessments.

Online modules automatically record completion once the modules are completed successfully by the participant.

Classroom courses will be marked off as completed by the Education and Training Administration team once the participant attended relevant classroom training.

Please refer to the Professional Development Pathways Guidelines document that is available on the website for detailed information on the various terms used in this document.

# PACU Nurse: **Advanced Beginner** Professional Development Pathway

## Section 1: Regional Anaesthesia: Spinal and Epidural Anaesthesia (Neuraxial) Peripheral Nerve Blocks and Obstetric Patients

### Learning Outcomes

- Conduct post-operative assessment on patients following neural blockade.
- Understanding of how sensory, motor, and autonomic nerve fibres respond to pain.
- Identify and manage a high spinal/epidural block.
- Demonstrates appropriate assessment of dermatome level.
- Describe the mechanism of action of epidural infusions for analgesia
- Deliver safe and effective care to patients receiving epidural infusions
- Recognize and respond to complications of epidural anaesthesia
- Recognise the indications and benefits associated with peripheral regional infusions
- Deliver safe and effective care to patients with peripheral regional infusions
- Discusses the importance of performing a fundal check

### Online Modules

#	Code	Title
1	425285164	Pain Management: Peripheral regional infusions
2	441985392	Pain Management Epidural Infusions

### External Learning Activities

Read [ANZCA PG03 \(A\) Guideline for the management of major regional anaesthesia](#)  
Read [Anatomy of the Spine](#)  
Read [The Role of Neuraxial Anaesthesia in Anaesthetic Practice](#)  
Read [Spinal, Epidural and Caudal Blocks: Mechanisms of Action](#)  
Read [Assessment of sensory block](#)  
Read [Peripheral Nerve Blocks](#)  
Read [SWSLHD Proc2021\\_049 Maternity: Caesarean Birth-postoperative and Postnatal Care](#)  
Read [GL2021\\_017 Postpartum Haemorrhage \(PPH\)](#)

### Operational Assessments

#	Code	Title
1	SWSLHD-OA-2025-12244	Post Caesarean Section Fundal Assessment

## Section 2: Local Anaesthetic Toxicity

### Learning Outcomes

- Describe the pathophysiology of Local Anaesthetic Toxicity
- Identify the causes and signs of Local Anaesthetic Toxicity
- Summarise the treatment options available for Local Anaesthetic Toxicity
- Understand the role of Intralipid in treating Local Anaesthetic Toxicity

### External Learning Activities

Read [Local Anaesthetic Toxicity](#)  
Read [Management of Severe Local Anaesthetic Toxicity Guidelines](#)  
Read [Intralipid-Myth or Miracle](#)

## Section 3: Beginner Pharmacological Concepts in Peri anaesthesia

### Learning Outcomes

- Develop more in-depth knowledge of the pharmacology of routine anaesthetic drugs and agents
- Gain a basis of the indication, mode of action, duration of action and adverse reactions of anaesthetic drugs
- Demonstrates an application of knowledge and understanding of physiological responses to anaesthesia
- Defines pain and its various types in the context of surgery
- Identify different classes of analgesia
- Define multimodal analgesia
- Discuss antibiotic prophylaxis in surgery
- Discuss the risk factors for PONV and its management

### Online Modules

#	Code	Title
1	137891572	Antimicrobial resistance: turn the tide
2	138867644	NPS: Surgical Antibiotic Prophylaxis

### External Learning Activities

- Read [Brainkart \(2023\) Analgesic Agents: Opioids](#)
- Read [Brainkart \(2023\) Propofol](#)
- Read [Brainkart \(2023\) Depolarising Muscle Relaxants: Succinylcholine](#)
- Read [NCBI \(2022\) Nondepolarizing Paralytics](#)
- Read [Brainkart \(2023\) Reversal of Neuromuscular Blockade](#)
- Read [Barinkart \(2023\) Sugammadex](#)
- Read [Brainkart \(2023\) Naloxone](#)
- Read [postoperative nausea & Vomiting PONV what to prescribe and when](#)
- Read [ANZCA PG07\(A\) Guideline on pre-anaesthesia consultation and patient preparation](#)

# PACU Nurse: **Advanced Beginner** Professional Development Pathway

## Section 4: Haemodynamic Monitoring

### Learning Outcomes

- Identifies role in haemodynamic monitoring care
- Discusses potential risk of infection with insertion of invasive devices
- Competent in setting up monitoring for invasive devices and the indications of haemodynamic monitoring in perioperative patients
- Collects blood sample under aseptic technique
- \*Uses blood gas machine to analyse sample

### Online Modules

#	Code	Title
1	388905689	eviQ Education Learning Pathway: Central Venous Access Devices  (This is a learning pathway in itself. It cannot be included in the PDP. The participant has to search for and complete the pathway separately.)
2	42364545	Invasive Device Protocols
3	113942676	Bloodsafe Collecting Blood Specimens
4	131157097	eMR Pathology Orders
5	92382802	Learning Path - CVADs: The Fundamentals  (This is a learning pathway in itself. It cannot be included in the PDP. The participant has to search for and complete the pathway separately.)

### External Learning Activities

Read [Surgical and Patient Risk Factors for Severe Arterial Line Complications in Adults](#)

### Operational Assessments

#	Code	Title
1	SWSLHD-OA-2024-12182	Perioperative: Insertion of Arterial Lines
2	SWSLHD-OA-2024-12183	Perioperative: Removal of Arterial Lines
3	SWSLHD-OA-2024-12184	Perioperative: Blood Gas Sampling

## Section 5: Assist the Anaesthetist with Insertion of ETT or LMA

### Learning Outcomes

- Describes the role of the airway and its anatomy
- Examines reasoning and critical importance behind preoxygenation
- Discuss the requirements for induction of anaesthetic
- Identifies range of airway equipment including Laryngeal Mask (LMAs) (first and second generation), Bougies Endotracheal Tube (ETT), Laryngoscope, Videolaryngoscope and blades.
- Develops skills to assess airway needs and adjuncts including sizes
- Outlines the stages of anaesthesia
- Demonstrates a safe and skilled support for the anaesthetist whilst managing a patient's airway.
- Discusses the reasoning and assists the anaesthetist in RSI intubation.
- Developing concept of airway anatomy including cricoid and applying cricoid pressure.
- Can describe and apply BURP and when it is applicable

### External Learning Activities

Read [Pre-oxygenation: Why and how?](#)

Watch [Laryngeal Mask Airway Insertion](#)

Read and Watch [Plan A alternative laryngoscopes and videolaryngoscopy](#)

View [Cormack Lahane laryngoscope grading](#)

Read and watch [Introducers and Guides: Bougies](#)

Watch [Endotracheal Intubation](#)

Watch [B.U.R.P Manoeuvre](#)

Read [Cricoid Pressure](#) and [Rapid Sequence Intubation \(RSI\)](#)

Read [Anaesthesia Stages](#)

## Section 6: Introduction to the Deteriorating Perioperative Patient

### Learning Outcomes

- Recognising and responding to clinical deterioration in the early stages
- Work as part of a multidisciplinary team responding to deterioration.
- Undertake a systematic clinical assessment.
- Application the DETECT process

### Online Modules

#	Code	Title
1	91024921	Between the Flags- Deteriorating Patient Learning Pathway-Adult Patients
2	339664570	Module 1 Electrocardiogram (ECG) fundamentals
3	359181145	Module 2 Basic understanding of the electrocardiogram (ECG) and rhythm interpretation

### External Learning Activities

Read [NSW Health Recognition and management of patients who are deteriorating](#)

## Section 7: Hypotension and Shock

### Learning Outcomes

- Evaluates the cause of hypotension in the post-operative period
- Discuss the factors influencing perioperative fluid management
- Understanding of fluid and electrolyte balance in the perioperative period
- State definition of critical bleeding and Mass Transfusion Protocol (MTP)
- Assess and recognise critical bleeding
- Describes bodies response to blood loss and stages of shock
- Identify various approaches to stop critical bleeding
- Implement basic resuscitation, management and monitoring required in a critical bleeding situation
- Safely administer blood products.
- Recognise transfusion reactions in the Perioperative patient.
- Complete documentation of blood administration in the eMR

### Online Modules

#	Code	Title
1	339658231	SWSLHD eMeds Nursing Course 5 - Documenting Intravenous Fluids and updating Intravenous Fluid volume
2	399033793	Ordering Blood and Blood Products in the eMR  (This is a learning pathway in itself. It cannot be included in the PDP. The participant has to search for and complete the pathway separately.)
3	93893530	Bloodsafe: Acute Care & Surgical-Perioperative
4	93882195	Acute Care and Surgical- Critical Bleeding
5	396871673	Documenting Administration of Blood and Blood Products in the eMR  (This is a learning pathway in itself. It cannot be included in the PDP. The participant has to search for and complete the pathway separately.)

### External Learning Activities

Read [perioperative hypotension causes and remedies](#)

Read [User-applied labelling of injectable medicines, fluids and lines: Labelling in Perioperative Areas](#)

### Operational Assessments

#	Code	Title
1	SWSLHD-OA-2020-1211	Blood Product Transfusion Administration

## Assignments

Each section has a sub-section on Assignments. These assignments include activities that the participant is required to complete in collaboration with their manager. These activities are often actions that need to be completed outside of My Health Learning.

Once all actions are completed, the participant and their manager are required to complete the checklist that is provided at the end of this document. This checklist acts as a 'final sign off' by the manager confirming that the participant has met all requirements listed within this document and pathway.

The signed checklist has to be scanned and emailed to the Education and Organisational Development Service (EODS) via email at [SWLHD-EducationOD@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SWLHD-EducationOD@health.nsw.gov.au).

The EODS team will mark off the final assignment in My Health Learning. An automatic certificate of completion will be generated for the Pathway once this assignment is marked off.

Assignments for each section are provided below.

### **Section 1: Regional Anaesthesia: Spinal and Epidural Anaesthesia (Neuraxial) Peripheral Nerve Blocks and Obstetric Patients**

Reflective Practice Module Regional Anaesthesia and Obstetric Patients

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section; and
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Activity** With your preceptor, assess and document the dermatome level of your post-operative patient.

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

### Section 2: Local Anaesthetic Toxicity

Reflective Practice Module Local Anaesthetic Toxicity

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section and;
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Discuss** With your CNE participating in a Local Anaesthetic Toxicity simulation.
  - **Observe and Discuss** The calculations for local anaesthetic dosages

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

### Section 3: Beginner Pharmacological Concepts in Peri anaesthesia

Reflective Practice Module Beginner Pharmacological Concepts in Peri anaesthesia

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section; and
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Activity** Engage in discussions with an anaesthetist regarding some of the anaesthetic medications and techniques they regularly used. What's the rationale for their practice?
  - **Activity** Review a patient's pre-operative assessment and note any documentation on PONV

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

### Section 4: Haemodynamic Monitoring

Accreditation on the blood gas analyser within your department  
Arterial line insertion Logbook  
Arterial line removal logbook  
Reflective Practice Module Haemodynamic monitoring

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section; and
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Activity** Under the guidance of your preceptor/CNE, prepare a set up and assist in the insertion of an arterial line.
  - **Activity** With assistance from your preceptor/CNE, connect the arterial line up for monitoring.
  - **Activity** Under the guidance of your preceptor/CNE, prepare a set up and assist your anaesthetist in the insertion of a CVAD.
  - **\*Activity** For facilities with a Blood Gas Analyser, complete a sample analysis with your preceptor/CNE and become accredited

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

### Section 5: Assist the Anaesthetist with Insertion of ETT or LMA

Insertion of an airway logbook

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section; and
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Activity**: Work with your preceptor to commence pre-oxygenation utilising appropriate airway manoeuvres.
  - **Activity**: Work with your preceptor to assist the anaesthetist in endotracheal intubation
  - **Activity**: Work with your preceptor to correctly identify the cricoid in context of applying cricoid pressure for RSI
  - **Activity**: Work with your preceptor to assist the anaesthetist with an LMA insertion

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

### Section 6: Introduction to the Deteriorating Perioperative Patient

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section; and
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Discuss:** With your manager study leave to attend DETECT training as part of the Deteriorating Patient Learning Pathway
  - **Complete** Allocation of daily checking of MET trolley to familiarise self with contents.

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

### Section 7: Hypotension and Shock

Reflective Practice Module Hypotension and Shock

The manager should mark this assignment as completed after they:

- meet with the participant to confirm learning and knowledge gained from all external activities listed in this section.
- the participant successfully completes the following activities:
  - **Activity** Work with your preceptor/CNE to administer blood products
  - **Locate:** your facilities flow chart on MTP activation and familiarise yourself with its contents.
  - **Locate:** your facilities pathology/blood bank

The manager/preceptor must ensure they provide sufficient opportunities for the participant to practice the skills and support the participant in attaining an appropriate level of competence in this section before signing the participant off as having completed this assignment.

## PACU Nurse **Advanced Beginner** Professional Development Pathway Completion Form

This form confirms that the participant has completed all requirements of the Professional Development Pathway and can be issued a certificate of completion in My Health Learning (MHL).

<b>Participant Name</b>		<b>Employee Number</b>	
<b>Department</b>		<b>Facility/Service</b>	
<b>Date</b>		<b>Participant Signature</b>	
<b>Line Manager Confirmation</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> I confirm that the participant has completed all requirement of the Pathway including additional workplace experiential activities that are required as part of this pathway.			
<b>Manager Name</b>		<b>Manager Role</b>	
<b>Date</b>		<b>Manager Signature</b>	

### Assignments

The Pathway includes assignments in the following sections that have been completed by the participants.

Course Name	Completed? ✓ or X
Section 1: Regional Anaesthesia: Spinal and Epidural Anaesthesia (Neuraxial) Peripheral Nerve Blocks and Obstetric Patients	
Section 2: Local Anaesthetic Toxicity	
Section 3: Beginner Pharmacological Concepts in Peri anaesthesia	
Section 4: Haemodynamic Monitoring	
Section 5: Assist the Anaesthetist with Insertion of ETT or LMA	
Section 6: Introduction to the Deteriorating Perioperative Patient	
Section 7: Hypotension and Shock	

**Submit the completed and signed form to the Education and Organisational Development Service (EODS) via email at [SWSLHD-EducationOD@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:SWSLHD-EducationOD@health.nsw.gov.au) for sign off in My Health Learning.**

Professional Development Pathway Completion Form