

Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

Kalispell, MT

About Logan Health PACU :

- **Patient demographics:** 1 month old and up
- **Schedules and call requirements:** We have a mix of three and four 10-hour/day shift staff. Call requirement is 4-5 call shifts/month with 2 of those days being a weekend day or night shift.

Common treatments and skill sets/procedures:

Common procedures include orthopedics, ear, nose and throat, plastics, ophthalmology, podiatry, general surgery, neurosurgery, OB/GYN, urology, cardiac surgeries and procedures, and trauma. Important skills include advanced cardiac life support (ACLS), pediatric advanced life support (PALS), critical thinking and time management.

Qualities of a PACU nurse:

Nurses that will thrive in this environment need to be flexible and ready to handle any situation. PACU nurses need to be able to think critically and quickly. Patients emerging from anesthesia can fall into critical situations quickly, so nurses need to be able to pick up on changes in patient status and act fast. Our daily schedules are dependent on the OR schedule. Sometimes surgeons finish early, and sometimes they finish late. Nurses who have a go with the flow attitude typically do very well in the PACU.

A day in the life of our unit:

A day in the life of our unit looks different from one day to the next. Sometimes we have five surgeries scheduled and sometimes we have 40! Sometimes we have no pediatric patients and some days we have a majority pediatric patients. Shifts sometimes end early and go late. The PACU nurses have an incredible sense of teamwork. Other nurses are always there to jump in and help so you are never alone. PACU nurses typically have a great relationship with and work closely with the anesthesiologists, so there is easily accessible backup from a physician.

Our PACU nurses have an incredible amount of critical care knowledge with diverse backgrounds



that include ICU, ER, flight nurses, educators, and even a couple of former nurse practitioners. Our nursing residents are surrounded by a wealth of nursing knowledge and are well supported, not only throughout their residency, but for the life of their PACU career. Our nurses also like to have fun outside of work and can frequently be seen biking, hiking, rafting, camping, or just enjoying a drink at one of our local breweries together.

