

Brenley Irvin

Final Clinical Reflection

Over the past eight weeks I have been doing my clinical rotations in the PICU. The PICU was a place that I was not especially comfortable with to begin with, but the more I was able to get experience there, the more I began to enjoy it. At first, I was overwhelmed by how critical some of the patients were. I was nervous about handling the patients and being involved in their care. I began to feel more confident the more experience I got. I feel like I got to see pretty much everything at least once. I went into this preceptorship having no experience and little knowledge about EVDs and ventilators and I feel like those two things are something that I am much more educated about now. I also got to experience how quickly a situation can go downhill and witness how the staff reacts to a critical situation. One on occasion, the staff extubated a patient, and the patient did not respond as anticipated to the extubation. The patient's oxygen saturation dropped from 100% to 24% within five minutes. The staff responded very quickly and worked together as a team to get the patient re-intubated. This experience made me realize how quickly a patient's status can change, and how to properly respond to those changes.

While being on this floor, I was educated about many different medications that are life saving for these critical patients. I learned a lot about epi drips, dopamine drips, sedating and paralytic medications. I even got the opportunity to administer some of these medications. I learned how to zero an EVD and collect CSF from an EVD. I was able to perform blood draws from central and peripheral lines. I was educated on how to titrate drips and calculate medication doses based on certain vital signs, such as blood pressure.

The areas I feel like I did not have the opportunity to improve in were communication and charting. My preceptor had a new hire orienting with her on every shift. I was not able to give or receive report, communicate with physicians or other staff or chart anything on the patient. Although I was unable to get experience with these things, I feel like I still learned a very large amount being on this floor. Before going into this preceptorship, I would not have considered the PICU a place I would want to work, but now it is a place that I would love to work someday if the opportunity presents itself. I think overall, this preceptorship has been extremely beneficial in making me more comfortable going in to the role of the total patient care nurse.