

My clinical preceptorship has been a great experience thus far with lots of learning and experience gained. I feel like I become stronger as a nurse with each shift and that my confidence is growing. There have been multiple events where I've felt that I'm growing, but one specific one would be after getting lab results back for a patient of mine. This patient's labs returned with an in-range potassium of 3.7. At first glance I recognized that this was in range, but my patient was on an insulin drip that I had been titrating Q1. Without prompting from my preceptor, I decided to check the mar PRN meds to see if there was an order for potassium replacement since I understood that the patient's potassium was likely to continue to drop. I found the order for two 20mg doses of potassium Q1 and I hung the replacements. The next labs my patient was over 4 on potassium outside of the range for extra replacement.

My feelings during this event were great. I felt like I was able to recognize a potential problem due to my education and I was able to see the results of fixing that problem in real time. It was a great experience and boosted my confidence greatly. The outcome made me feel good both for the patient and that I can do this. This even was good because the patient was able to get a needed intervention!

From this situation I can apply the understanding that patient care isn't just following set instructions that I plan out in advanced. Using my education and experience I will be able to care for patients dynamically based on what nursing needs I find in them. In the case where a patient such as this didn't have potassium ordered I would be able to recommend an order to the physician to ensure my patient is getting important interventions.

In conclusion I have learned how important critical thinking is during my clinical time. I have only had four shifts so far, but I have experienced a great deal of different situations that call for different actions by me and the health care staff. I have experienced patients who are relatively low maintenance and those who require a lot more, but no matter how much maintenance my patients have required they have all needed the nurses to understand what is going on with them and customized care tailored for them. It is really great to see the difference you can make for the patients whether it is lifesaving or simply providing comfort it is all important.