

Covenant School of Nursing

Disciplinary Action Summary Assignment

Instructional Module 2

Student Name: Kenann Rodgers

Date: 1/15/2023

DAS Assignment # 1

Name of the defendant: Joan Armstrong

License number of the defendant: 581334

Date action was taken against the license: September 11, 2012

Type of action taken against the license: Revoked

Armstrong showed up to her shift late that she was on call for and was acting out of the norm. She was seen laughing and had slurred speech and was not able to walk straight. Due to her actions, she was drug tested and the test came back positive for Butalbital and Hydrocodone. As both are narcotics, it would make sense to see this being the reason that Armstrong was acting the way she was. Her first charge was due to her actions, as her second charge was due to drug diversion. The document states that- "Respondent's condition could have affected her ability to recognize subtle signs, symptoms, or changes in patients' conditions, and could have affected her ability to make rational, accurate, and appropriate assessments, judgements, and decisions regarding patient care, thereby placing the patients in potential danger." The second charge states the same reasoning but includes that Butalbital and Hydrocodone should not be of use while a nurse is on call or on duty as it can also cause the same potential harm to a patient.

There is only one answer to how this situation could have been prevented, and it is that no nurse or anyone in the medical field should have drugs or alcohol in their system prior to going to work or potentially being able to be called into work. Although Armstrong was on call, she knew there was a chance for her to have to go in for a shift, but she still chose to take drugs that impaired her to a point where she became dangerous to her patients as far as being able to take care of them and advocate for them in the way she should. This was an irresponsible mistake that cost her license.

When it comes to identifying what universal competencies were violated, I feel that in this situation, there was a potential for all of them to be at stake since Armstrong was under the influence. But, from what the document gives us, she violated communication and her professional role. Communication was violated due to her impairment that she would not be able to recognize anything going on with her patient and was unable to make proper judgements regarding them as well. Since communication was violated, she could miss a serious issue regarding her patient to the point of something going unnoticed or not reported, that it could have cost a patient their life. The professional role as a nurse was violated as well due to her appearance, interaction with peers, staff, and family, and being able to manage equipment. Her appearance was that she was having slurred speech and could not even walk right. Her interaction could also be the slurred speech but also that she was laughing. Lastly managing equipment, if she is unable to walk straight or even speak clearly, how would she be able to use equipment safely and properly without there being a big risk of hurting a patient?

If I was the person who saw Armstrong in this state, I would go to the charge nurse and notify her of her behavior. As nurses, we are advocates for our patients and therefore should be delivering the best care to our abilities and being under the influence will obviously impair that. I look at this situation not only from the student

nurse point of view, but as someone who could be a patient and dealing with something like this. Imagine if it was my mother or father being taken care of by someone who was not in the right mind to provide care for them and due to that, put them in danger or even killed them. It is hard to even reason with why this nurse even did what she did because I see no excuses for it. Armstrong knew she was on call but still chose to do something she knew would cause her to not be able to function properly. I would have immediately gone to a superior to let them know she did not need to be handling any sort of equipment or be around any patients and would most likely need to be sent home.