

Andrea Acosta
Instructional Module 8
January 30th, 2023

During my fourth shift at Covenant Women's and Children's, I was able to care for my patient and implement the nursing process by myself. With the help of my preceptor Keeley, and her newly Registered Nurse Mallory we were able to determine the plan of care for them. During the report, it became quite clear that my patient was possibly experiencing a psychosomatic disorder. Though it was determined that my patient was diagnosed with bilateral lower extremity paralysis, it became apparent that my patient was able to move her lower extremities on her own. I knew that my role in my patient's care was to help them explore their symptoms and determine what could be causing their bilateral numbness.

At the beginning of my shift, my preceptor gave me the option to choose from two patients. One patient who was a toddler and the other who was a school-age child. I believed that it would be less complicated for me to care for the school-aged child since they would be able to communicate better and voice their issues. However, when it came time to prepare my patient for their MRI it became very apparent that this patient would be more difficult than I assumed. When I began to administer the prescribed 3 mg dose of Ativan to help alleviate their anxiety, the side effects began to take place. I knew that what my patient was experiencing was common, however, it later became obvious that my patient was unable to withstand these effects.

Once my patient returned from the uncompleted MRI, a CNA came up to my preceptor to inform us that my patient was having a severe panic attack. When we walked into their room, it became very evident that they were hyperventilating and having hallucinations. My preceptor and her orientee didn't seem very interested in staying with them and helping them work through their anxiety. However, I knew that it was my job to stay with them and help them calm down. As I was practicing my distraction skill and deep breathing methods, my patient lashed

Andrea Acosta
Instructional Module 8
January 30th, 2023

out on their mother since they were under immense anxiety. This then caused the mother to become upset and defensive about the things that my patient was saying to her. When this occurred it made me feel extremely frustrated because my patient was beginning to settle down, and the argument made them go back into a state of panic. However, I knew that I had to continue my nursing practice and return my patient to a baseline that won't cause her to become hypocapnic. After an hour, the patient was able to control their respirations and communicate their needs with me. Ultimately then apologizing to me and my preceptor for behaving that way because she believed we would base how we feel on how she reacted to the medication.

The main thing that I believed was difficult throughout my patient's panic attack, was learning that I cannot expect my patient to calm down after 10 minutes of deep breathing. Something that I believed was easy, was applying my distraction skills and knowledge that I learned in Instruction Module Six to help calm down my patient. I believe that I did a great job in helping my patient relax because I made sure to speak in a calm tone, guide my patient through their anxiety, and ultimately get them back to baseline.

As I previously stated, I was able to apply my knowledge about anxiety disorders and panic attacks to help guide my patient back to a calm state. Some broader issues that I noticed arise in this situation was how my patient's mother was more occupied with her phone rather than helping her cope with her anxiety. I knew immediately that my patient's mother not being present at that moment could have triggered more stress because at that moment my patient needed their mother to comfort them. This could be a key reason why my patient could be exhibiting psychosomatic symptoms for something that wasn't truthfully there. Once my preceptor got the chance to check up on my patient, and left the room with me she told me

Andrea Acosta
Instructional Module 8
January 30th, 2023

something that quite frankly didn't sit right with me. She stated that she believed that the patient was simply being a "drama queen" and I couldn't agree with that statement because my patient just simply didn't know how to cope her anxiety, stress, and feelings of the unknown.

I believe that the situation could have been a hundred times better if my patient's mother took a role in helping her daughter cope with her panic attack by being present and holding her daughter. I believe that I did the best that I could to help my patient work through her hallucinations, stress, and anxiety with the tools that I had on hand. Something that I believe could have been done differently, was asking for my nurse to contact my patient's provider to ask for an order of fluids to help flush out the Ativan from their system. One thing that I learned throughout this entire situation was patience and empathy. Not just in this circumstance, but throughout my entire time in my preceptorship. I have gained a sense of understanding of how stressful situations can have a major impact on a family dynamic and how it's important for me to help people explore their underlying feelings.

During my time in my preceptorship, I have been able to play the role of a nurse and understand how nursing isn't just about administering medications, performing assessments, and documenting information on EPIC. Nursing is being able to impact the lives of others when they're at a low point in their life. Being able to show them a sense of comfort or hope when they need it the most. Though there are unfortunate situations that have occurred during my time on the Pediatric floor, I have come to terms that I cannot change what has happened but I can make sure to make an impact on people's lives by being present with them at that moment. Showing patients that they are worthy and deserving of attention and being understood by someone who isn't there to fix everything, but is there to make them feel validated and cared for.