

Covenant School of Nursing

Disciplinary Action Summary Assignment

Instructional Module 2

Student Name: haylea cowart Date: 02/10/2023 DAS Assignment # ____4____ (1-4)

Name of the defendant: Erica Lea Baum

License number of the defendant: 778099

Date action was taken against the license: January 23, 2018

Type of action taken against the license: warning with stipulations

The respondent was found "physically unfit" for the role as the nurse after an incident had occurred where she was "slurring her speech and appeared disheveled". Not only was the respondent slurring her words and acting out of sorts, she smelt like alcohol. The respondent was not scheduled for the shift this incident occurred during, yet she had got called to see if she would like to take on the shift and agreed to take on the shift. Any time the respondent gets approached about the incident she denies ever being impaired while being in the role as "nurse". Due to the incident previously stated the respondent got sent to get a "Chemical dependency" evaluation completed with a doctor. This evaluation ended up showing that the respondent was having a problem with anxiety and depression and both of those mental illnesses had been an ongoing problem within the respondent's life. During the evaluation the respondent had admitted to having some substance abuse issues especially with alcohol as she was using them as coping mechanisms, and the test results came back with a minor indication of "substance use disorder".

I believe a lot of measures could have been taken to prevent this incident from occurring. The simplest action that could of and should have been taken was with the respondent just declining the offer to take that shift. With knowing she had consumed some alcohol within 8 hours of going into work she should not have agreed to take on an extra shift when she was physically incapable of doing so. As the role of nurse you are responsible for peoples lives and you must take that very seriously, and taking a shift when intoxicated is never something one should do. Even if the respondent was not drunk and had just had one drink, that is one drink to many to be caring for peoples lives. Another thing that should have been done to prevent this incident from happening was the respondent should have reached out for help, a lot of people are too afraid to admit they are struggling mentally but it is a must whenever other people's lives are at the sake of you. Mental health is not something anyone wants to say they struggle with but way more people struggle with mental health issues than the percentage that doesn't so I feel as though no one should ever feel embarrassed or like its not okay to struggle mentally sometimes. Lastly, her coworkers should of picked up on signs and tried talking to her or let the charge nurse know that they suspect something is off with their coworker. Not only for patients' sake but also for the sake of them and their career as well as their fellow nurse and her career.

There are a few universal competencies that were not met through this nurses actions, the main one being professionalism. Nothing about her actions were professional, the respondent should have never taken the shift, should have never consumed alcohol if she was willing to pick up a shift, and the respondent should have just been truthful about her consumption of alcohol before the shift. If she would have told her director no I can not as I have consumed an alcoholic beverage, the director may have questioned her and thought of her in a little bit more of a down way, but I know the director would have been more than glad she was truthful and

didn't take the shift then take the shift anyways. Slurring her speech is not only a professionalism universal competency it is also a communication, because how can you clearly communicate with your patients if you are not even able to fully talk coherently. Lastly, the universal competency of critical thinking was unfulfilled as you can not critically think about the job/tasks at hand if you are impaired.

If I was to notice a fellow coworker had come to work impaired, I would talk to them and let them know they shouldn't further take care of any patients. In doing this I would go about it in a way of like asking them if they had had a drink and if they would like me to keep an eye on their patients while they had a moment to themselves to drink some water. I would tell the charge nurse immediately and see what we were going to do about the coverage of the patients as I would not want someone, I loved to be cared for by someone that was under the influence or impaired. I also would have tried talking to the respondent and seeing if there was, anyway, I could help before this incident if I noticed a change in her mental health. I know some people do not show symptoms of mental health struggles, but I feel as though I would notice if my coworker was off during a 12-hour shift. The respondent had stated that her work environment was stressful, so if I had felt the same way I would have tried to talk to the respondent and see what we felt like our next steps would be in order to make our work environment the best we could as the role of nurse requires a lot from us and we need to be in the best work environments we can be in.