

Covenant School of Nursing
Disciplinary Action Summary Assignment
Instructional Module 2

Student Name: Olivia Palermo

Date: 3-30-2023

DAS Assignment # 2

Name of the defendant: Matthew James Powers License number of the defendant: 712586

Date action was taken against the license: 18-July-2018

Type of action taken against the license: Revoking of license

Use the space below to describe the events which led to the action(s) taken against the license. If multiple charges were in play, be sure and cite them, e.g. drug diversion, HIPAA violation, abandonment, forfeiture on student loans, etc.

On June 15th, 2006, Powers worked as a registered nurse at Arlington Memorial Hospital, where he took Demerol and Morphine from the hospital and his patient for personal use. This violation is considered a drug diversion since Powers took medications from a patient, not allowing the best care. Furthermore, on February 16th, 2008, Powers took Morphine from the facility and the patient while working at Las Colinas Medical Center. Powers was seen placing a 2mg syringe of Morphine in the pocket of his jacket by the end of the 12-hour shift. While being questioned about his behavior, Powers admitted to his facility's House Supervisor that he removed the syringe from the sharps container to keep the medication for himself. Lastly, on March 17th, 2008, while in the Texas Peer Assistant Program for Nurses (TPAPN), Powers tested positive for Ethyl Glucuronide (alcohol) while on duty in the hospital. Having alcohol in the system while caring for patients impairs the person's ability to function correctly and allows the opportunity to harm a patient.

Use the space below to provide a description of measures you think could have prevented any action being taken against the license and/or would have prevented harm to the patient, if harm occurred.

Powers had his license revoked because he wanted to keep medications for his own personal use, not allowing patients to get what they needed to heal, be less painful, and get the best of care. To prevent this from happening, Powers shouldn't have taken Demerol and Morphine from his patients. The correct thing to do as a nurse is to administer patients' medication in total amount and correctly without taking it for the nurse's use. Another action that could be implemented to prevent nurses from taking medications is to make it more challenging to get syringes from a sharps container. Powers was able to put his hand into the container and take medications for himself. If sharp boxes had a multi-lock system or a smaller space to drop syringes into would make the process of grabbing used tools much more difficult. However, Power's actions showed his inability to be a good nurse. As a nurse, one goes to work to save and help lives rejuvenate. A qualified nurse must know right from wrong to prevent these wrongful actions from occurring.

Identify which universal competencies were violated and explain how.

The “Seven Rights of Medication Administration” (safety and security) was violated when Powers did not administer Demerol and Morphine to his patients. This is a universal competency because, as nurses, we must understand the importance of caring for our patients in the best way possible: giving the right medication and dose when a patient needs a drug for the best care. The “human caring” universal competency was also violated since Powers did not treat his patients with respect and dignity. This shows when he kept medications for personal use without thinking of the adverse effects that could reflect on the patients such as pain and increase of illness without the proper medications being given. Lastly, the “professional role” was violated when Powers showed up to work under the influence of alcohol. Working in the hospital is a challenging environment to thrive in. One is administering medications, talking to patients, completing assessments, and completing critical thinking to help patients with their health needs. While under the influence of alcohol, one is not entirely sane to see errors, issues, and problems that must be resolved, leaving the patients in the dark. With that said, Powers was not an efficient nurse because he put himself in positions that could have hurt a patient, costing him his license.

Use the space below to describe what action you think a prudent nurse would take as the first to person to discover the event described, in other words, you are the one who discovers the patient has been harmed by the nurse or you have discovered the impairment or criminal activity cited in the disciplinary action.

If I was the nurse to first discover Power's actions, I would talk to him face-to-face to discover if he was trying to keep medications for himself. This would allow me to get his side of the story and compare it to what I witnessed from a far. After taking time to uncover his actions, I would then go to the charge nurse to explain what I saw and how he reacted to me. As a nurse, our job is to give everyone the best care, whether they are getting large volumes of medication or minuscule amounts. Without proper drugs, they are not receiving the care they deserve. Unfortunately, Powers was not an efficient nurse since he took medications from his patients multiple times. I would resolve this situation as best as possible by talking to someone with higher authority who could stop his behavior.