

Midterm Clinical Reflection

Joanna Laguna

During this preceptorship, I was assigned to the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU). These past 5 shifts, I have taken care of multiple patients, each with a different diagnosis that expands to more than just cardiac conditions. The first few shifts, we actually took care of a GI bleed and an electrolyte imbalance issue. At first, I was nervous, especially since I expected critical patients that may require complicated nursing actions. Additionally, I diagnosed myself to have performance anxiety and being one-on-one with an experienced nurse gave me anxious feelings days before my first shift. However, my preceptor is very welcoming and amazing at her job as well as her co-workers that were so friendly to us students and really emphasizes learning opportunities when it comes to interesting situations that we likely have not encountered before. By the fifth shift, I feel welcomed on the floor and feel so much less nervous and anxious than I did the first day. The only negative feeling I have was how exhausted I was after doing 3-day straight shifts. By the third day, I could already feel the burn-out coming and my nurse seemed less tolerant, especially with a patient that has quite a difficult attitude. Now I understand the importance of checking myself and my emotions, as well as self-care that includes taking a break and finding my limits.

Although exhausting, I am learning a lot about working in this unit and what it actually looks like being a nurse and having the ability to take on multiple patients. I am able to perform a lot of skills that I have only done in simulation so I feel a little more confident in becoming a nurse. I am also improving on assessing multiple patients and documenting my findings, time management, administering appropriate medications, as well as knowing medical terminologies. Although I do need further improvement on a lot of things, including giving reports, communicating to doctors and patient's families, and understanding adjustments. Also, since I do feel under pressure, I do things very cautiously and often ask for confirmation, which affects my confidence and efficiency, things that I need a whole lot of improvements on.

Overall I am feeling good about these last 5 shifts. There are days that are exciting, which of course brings a lot of learning opportunities. The staff are amazing at providing a learning environment as they do not limit me specifically to my preceptor but instead other nurses invite me to observe and participate in other interesting situations when they arise. Most importantly, they are very encouraging and supportive with inexperienced students like me who feel nervous when participating and performing a skill we've only done on a mannequin. I also learned that even the most experienced nurse encounters new things that require the help of others. This really helps me in easing my doubts about becoming a nurse and being able to take care of patients on my own. It allows me to understand that nursing is an ever evolving career and that there are many things outside the scope of nursing school that I may encounter in the future and when it comes, it is absolutely ok to be uneducated as long as I do the utmost effort to learn about it and that it is also absolutely ok to ask for help when I get stuck.

