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Midterm Clinical Reflection

So far in my experience precepting in the pediatric ICU, I have gotten to see and learn so much. Being hands-on with so many very sick patients has taught me so much even just in the first half of my clinical preceptorship hours. Getting this experience to act as TPCN with the safety of being a student and having a preceptor along with me every step of the way has really made me feel safe to practice and ask questions.

Being in the critical care setting, I have certainly felt like I still have a lot of learning to do. Even with that, I have felt proud of myself when I can critically think with my nurse and work through some very complex problems that have a lot of intertwined intricate problems associated with them. I was definitely more nervous at the start of my preceptorship versus how I am currently feeling. I think that the nervousness I was feeling stemmed from many uncertain factors: how my preceptor was going to accept having a student, how the unit would respond to me being there as a module 8 student and not a tech, and many other concerns that I was facing going into a new role.

I want to reflect on one specific interaction. I had a patient who had a tracheostomy. I had never taken care of a patient with a trach besides in the SIM lab. This is a situation that we as student nurses encounter a lot throughout our schooling, and even with some skills post-graduation. For me, in this instance, it wasn't the nervousness about my 'skills' but more of 'woah' I have never done this on a real-life person because it is so different. The trach was 12 days old, so my patient's parents had been educated immensely up to this point. They were doing the majority of the patient's care, so I wasn't going to have the opportunity to learn with my nurse. I was proud of myself for asking my patient's parents if when they did trach care they could teach me and walk me through all of the steps. They were happy to help educate me and later walked me through what they do, what they were taught, and how often they do their cares. This definitely helped to educate me and give me experience on a real patient. I felt proud of myself for advocating for my education and I found myself doing this on numerous occasions. Sometimes it can be hard to stand up and say I don't know this, I've never done this, or any phrase that makes you feel out of place or not 'up to standard'. Throughout nursing school, I have noticed that I have been letting go of that fear as I have learned that it's okay to NOT know and to NOT be confident in something and that it's OKAY to ask for help. I have found myself comfortable on this unit for many reasons, but the main reason is that I see the nurses come up to their coworkers and ask questions, clarification, and for assistance.