

Alexandra Redman

Clinical Reflection

As of today, I have completed two of my clinical shifts and already gained so much knowledge. Since I have started my preceptorship on the Pediatric Med/Surg floor I have seen many outcomes such as patients' being helped and sent home, patients' being transferred to other facilities, or patient's having to stay on our floor until the physicians can make an actual diagnosis. No matter what the outcome was, I learned so much every step of the way.

My first patient was an 8-year-old who had come in for a ruptured appendix. He had an appendectomy in the OR and was transferred to our floor after. While performing his head-to-toe assessment, I noticed his abdomen was extremely distended and hard as rock. He had been complaining of stomach pain and nausea the night before as well. As the day progressed, his pain became worse until it made him have multiple episodes of emesis. What was different about these episodes, was that he was vomiting up stool instead of his stomach contents. The physician decided to make him NPO and we continued to monitor him. He continued to have episodes of throwing up, so the physician asked us to place an NG tube on this patient to suction any contents he still had in his stomach. I had never seen an NG tube be placed so I was very intrigued to be able to witness my first one. The patient was very nervous so I asked him if he would like to hold my hand during the procedure and he did. He didn't stop holding my hand until we brought him back to his room and helped him into bed. This was a different kind of learning experience for me. In the sense of learning bedside clinical skills, it was amazing to be able to watch the placement of an NG tube firsthand and be walked through the entire process so hopefully I could perform the next one. I also got to bond with the patient and be the reason he took the placement of the NG tube so well. He trusted me enough to not let go of my hand until he got escorted across the unit and placed back in his bed. I think a lot of the time people are so caught up in the technicalities of their jobs and just trying to finish tasks and we forget about how the actual patient feels. With that being said, even though I wasn't the one placing the NG tube, I still got to make an impact on this patient and his family.

During both of my clinical shifts I have completed so far, I also got to witness the administration of chemotherapy. Even though it is a sad experience, it is amazing seeing how close the nurses are to the patients' and their families. I had never seen chemo given to anyone before. It was interesting watching all the precautions the nurses take to ensure they are maintaining aseptic technique and following all of the rights of medication administration. The special gloves and gowns for the nurses, the special bag for the chemo, all of the verifications they go through was a great learning experience for me. I also got to watch them deaccess a port which I had never seen before either. It looked painful, but both patients' I watched it happen to seemed to handle it very well. My preceptor takes most of the chemo patients' so it was very heartwarming to see the patients' run up and hug her when they see her, or when the family's call her by name and she can do the same back.

Overall, these last couple of shifts have been extremely beneficial to me whether it be in the sense of learning new skills or observing patient advocacy. I have also learned how to chart head-to-toe assessments and navigate Epic which I always had trouble with before. This time has only made me want to become a nurse that much more. I cannot wait to continue learning new skills and anything else that will help me become a better nurse when the time comes.