

Katie Dunn - PICU  
4/23/24  
Capstone Final Reflection

These past 5 shifts have gone by so quick and were very educating. I had the opportunity to see various procedures and learn about the nurse's role on days that they sometimes have an assignment other than the regular ICU bedside assignment.

My sixth shift we took care of a kiddo who had a Life Gift organ procurement surgery that day. I am glad I got to experience that while being a student and having my preceptor with me throughout that whole process. I got to see all the labs that are drawn prior to surgery (we drew 45mLs of blood for testing) and the set-up process. I got to experience the honor walk that the pediatric hospital does for their Life Gift kiddos and families and it was both so beautiful and so sad. It was a very heavy day emotionally because this was a kiddo who had lived 12 meaningful years who lost his life. It was really hard to watch the family grieve throughout this process. I am glad I was able to be a part of their story and hopefully I was able to make it a little easier for them or at least give some comfort. I was very grateful for our team throughout this. Them knowing and acknowledging how this could/would feel for me meant and helped me a lot. I felt very supported throughout the day. It is important to express these hard feelings and acknowledge them and our team did a great job at making sure I felt safe to express how I was doing throughout the process.

Most of our other shifts after that were procedure days/bouncing back and forth from the intermediate care side of the unit! I wasn't expecting to have any procedure assignments during my preceptorship, but I am really glad I got to learn the nurses' role in procedures such as: a lumbar puncture and growth hormone stimulation testing. I had seen previous LPs, but it was in the nurse tech role, and I had only gotten to see the procedure and do the post-op vital signs. I had no previous knowledge about the growth hormone testing, besides when I had heard them say they had a growth hormone kid coming in, which in the past, I had just assumed they were administering GH and checking progression of the diagnosis. I learned that they actually come in for the test to diagnose growth hormone deficiency and that they haven't been diagnosed prior to coming in. It was interesting to learn about the process of the diagnosis. The test was composed off 3 specific medications and lab draws that were very time sensitive. It was very task oriented since we were having to draw labs every 15/30 mins (very time sensitive) meaning you were in their room a lot of the day, and I got to know the family. I really enjoyed the growth hormone day because it was task oriented, time specific, and I got to get to know the family and talk to them more than I would be able to if I had 3 patients.

Overall, my preceptorship in the PICU was full of learning and seeing new things. I enjoyed my shifts in this unit, and I am so grateful for this experience. Looking back to day 1 I can tell I made huge advancements across the board in my nursing care, abilities, knowledge, and confidence.