

Covenant School of Nursing
Disciplinary Action Summary Assignment
Instructional Module 2

Student Name: KADIE BERGMANN

Date: 8/30/2024

DAS Assignment #2

Name of the defendant: PENELOPE LYNCH

License number of the defendant: 505037

Date action was taken against the license: 1/27/2023

Type of action taken against the license: REVOKED

- *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.*

Penelope Lynch, RN had an occasion on May 16, 2022 while employed at Terrell State Hospital in Terrell, TX where staff found her to appear confused, stating she heard voices, crying, and was shaking. She went on to state to her fellow coworkers that she stopped drinking at 0300.

This could alter Lynch's ability to make decisions regarding patient care, do assessments, able to recognize signs, symptoms, and changes in patient status.

On another occasion, on May 16 2022, at the same hospital (Terrell State), she submitted two breathalyzer tests that resulted positive for alcohol at levels of 0.156 & 0.151.

This evidence justifies that the nurse was not fit to be at work and practice medicine. This put all the patients she came into contact with in serious danger because she could've given an inaccurate dose of medication, and made some wrong decisions regarding care.

- *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.*

Measures that could have been taken included: not showing up to work, not drinking to begin with. But since she did show up to work, not interact with patients at all and got help. At least she did not start doing patient care because then she was be held liable if she did something to the patient that could have been prevented if she either did not show up to work or did not drink.

She could have asked around to see if someone could take her shift while she took the day to rest and rehydrate. She also could have reached out to someone for help if she had any emotional distress and needed someone to talk to.

- *Identify ALL universal competencies were violated and explain how.*

Safety/Security: this was violated when the RN first took a drink of alcohol. If she drove to work that was a big violation that put regular civilians at risk, and then showing up to work put the patients at risk. Her confusion could have been really harmful if she performed a skill on a patient and was unable to correctly carry out the steps. She would not have been able to gain the patient's trust nor respect had she interacted.

Standard Precaution: Giving injections could have been severely harmful to the patient as well as starting IVs and drawing for blood. Any contact with needles and she could have stuck herself or others unnecessarily. Any sterile procedure she did would have been compromised and caused the patient an infection that could very well have led to the patient's deaths. By her crying and hearing voices she was a big disturbance to her patients while they healed.

Communication was violated when she did not communicate, she was under the influence to her coworkers to get her shift covered. Since she appeared confused, she would not have been able to properly teach her patients, and her communication style was not going to be effective because she was crying and hearing voices that were not actually there. She could have mistaken the voices she was hearing as the voice of the patient and said something inappropriate to them.

Critical Thinking was violated when she decided to still show up to work. Decision making was compromised here because of her impaired behavior. Her prioritization of tasks/ procedures would be all over the place due to the fact she was confused. Meds would not have been given properly nor on time. Her assessment related to patient symptoms would not be accurate as she would be hearing voices and could mistake the patient's answers for the voices she was hearing in her head.

Documentation: any documentation she did, if any, would be tossed out because we would not know if it was accurate findings or not.

Human Caring: Did not have respect for any patients when she came into work. Goes with the saying treat patients like they were your loved one and her practicing while under the influence is unprofessional behavior.

Professional Role: Her appearance was untidy and messy, her interaction with peers & staff was poorly portrayed as she was causing a disturbance and even admitted to her coworkers she was under the influence. Did not come prepared to carry out skills for the shift. Could not manage equipment of any kind effectively.

- *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 first person to discover her and her behavior, I would report to the charge nurse and get Lynch to the break room and try to give her fluids while also offering support if she needed it. Not support for being under the influence but support if it was because of a deeper personal matter. I would explain how she should not be practicing medicine under her conditions, and I do have to report her to the Board of Nursing. I would check in on her patients to be sure she had not performed any skills and if any harm was done. I would call the police if needed and

then that would be when they would come in and have her breath into a breathalyzer. She would the be taken into custody.