

Covenant School of Nursing

Disciplinary Action Summary Assignment

Instructional Module 2

Student Name: Madie McKinney

Date: 04/9/25

DAS Assignment # 2

Name of the defendant: Rhonda Mitchell White

License number of the defendant: 755997

Date action was taken against the license: 03/10/2020

Type of action taken against the license: Probated Suspension

Type of actions imposed to retain or regain licensure: The license was suspended, placed on probation for a minimum of 2 years and until respondent fulfilled additional requirements. These additional requirements include remedial education courses, a monetary fine, employment requirements, and drug & alcohol related requirements. Specifics of requirements are listed below.

Remedial Education: The respondent must complete the following remedial courses within 1 year of effective date, these courses include: A Board-approved course in Texas nursing jurisprudence and ethics, a Board-approved course in medication administration, a Board-approved course in nursing documentation, and the course "Sharpening Critical Thinking Skills".

Monetary Fine: The respondent was ordered to pay a monetary fine of \$500.00 withing forty-five days of the effective date of the order directly to the Texas Board of Nursing.

Employment: The respondent must work as a nurse in the State of Texas, providing direct patient care in the clinical setting for a minimum of 64 hours a month for eight quarterly periods or 2 years. For any job after this order is effective, the respondent must notify present and future employers & have employers submit notification of employment form. During the first year of employment as a nurse under this order the respondent must not practice as a nurse on night shift, rotate shifts, work overtime, or accept on-call assignments. Also, during the first year the respondent is not allowed to work in critical care, cannot administer controlled medications, is required to be under direct supervision as well as indirect supervision, and employer must submit nursing performance evaluations of the respondent.

Drug & Alcohol: While under this order the respondent must abstain from the use of alcohol, nalbuphine, propofol, and all controlled substances. The respondent will also submit to random periodic urinalysis screens for the previously mentioned substances. During the first 3 months random screens will occur at least one a week, the next 3 months at least twice per month, the 6 months after that screens will be performed once per month, and for the remainder of the probationary period screens should be performed at least once every three months.

- *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 each of them, e.g. drug diversion, HIPAA violation, abandonment, etc.*

Rhonda White performed many unprofessional actions, while working as a nurse in the clinical setting, these actions led to her license being put on probated suspension. The unprofessional actions included: Failure to document medication administration, failure to follow protocol for wasting unused medication, misappropriation of medications, lacking fitness to practice, and intemperate & unlawful use of Fentanyl. These actions resulted in putting patients at potential risk of harm due to inaccurate medical records and the nurse not being able to provide proper care because she was under the influence.

The first charge that Rhonda White was presented with was failure to document and/or completely accurately document the administration of the medications in the patients' Medical Administration Record and/or nurses' notes. On or around October 26-30, 2018, Rhonda withdrew 2 injections of Fentanyl (1000 mcg), 2 vials of Midazolam (2mg), and one tab of Oxycodone from the medication dispensing unit for three patients. However, she failed to document administering these medications. This could have caused major harm to patients, as other nurses and caretakers rely on her documentation, they could have medicated the patients further causing a potential overdose.

The second charge that was received was for failing to follow the facility's policy and procedures for wastage of the unused portions of the medications. The same medications she failed to document, she did not follow the facility's wastage protocols, which resulted in the medications being unaccounted for. This led to the third charge of misappropriation of these medications. Not disposing these drugs properly can result in the misuse or diversion of those medication to other people in which they are not intended.

Her fourth charge against her was lacking the fitness to practice while on duty. While Rhonda White was working as a nurse on October 31, 2018, she was observed having impaired behavior. Witnesses of this behavior stated she was taking long absences from the unit, being overly apologetic, hard to understand when communicating, clumsy, and acting sporadically. In this condition, Rhonda was unable to provide proper nursing care as she was under the influence. This could put patients under her care in potential danger due to her critical thinking being compromised.

Lastly, she was charged with the intemperate and unlawful use of Fentanyl. She received this charge because when she was screened for a reasonable cause drug test, it resulted positive for the drug Fentanyl. Using Fentanyl or any drug by that matter can impair a nurse's ability to perform her job correctly, as it impairs judgement, decision making, and critical thinking.

In conclusion, Rhonda White made several unprofessional decisions while working on the unit, resulting in her license being put on probated suspension. However, she was given opportunities to retain her license by completing additional requirements, and in doing so those could help her keep her license as a Registered Nurse.

- *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.*

Some measures that could have been taken by Rhonda White that could have prevented any action against her license would be to document all medication administration at the patient's bedside, following the hospital's medication wasting protocols, and abstaining from substance use. Documenting the medications at the patient's bedside, right after administering the medication, would have ensured timely documentation and made sure that the medical records were accurate. Following the hospital's

medication wasting protocols helps to ensure medications are not misused, if Rhonda white followed these protocols she could have avoided misappropriation of medications. Lastly, abstaining from substance use in nursing is a universal rule, partaking in substance use put patients' lives at risk and can cause harm or even death. The nurse should have sought out for substance abuse help before putting patients at risk.

- *Identify ALL universal competencies (4-5) that were violated and explain how in detail to reflect your understanding and importance of the universal competencies.*

The Universal Competencies that were violated were safety & security, critical thinking, documentation, and professional role.

Safety & Security was violated as the nurse did not promote trust and respect with her patients as she was under the influence while on duty. If a nurse is not 100% there and present for her patients, this can put a strain on the patient's relationship with the nurse and their trust to receive the best care from them. A nurse needs to be able to provide attentive care while working to ensure their patients are receiving all the help they need, being under the influence impairs their ability to do so.

Critical Thinking was violated due to the nurse showing up for duty while under the influence. This greatly affected her judgement and decision making and could have put patients at great risk for harm. She could not give the proper care those patients needed from her in that moment due to her critical thinking being impaired.

Documentation was violated because the RN did not accurately document medications that she administered the three different patients. The nurse withdrew 2 injections of fentanyl (1000 mcg), 2 vials of Midazolam (2mg), and 1 tab of Oxycodone/APAP (5/325 mg) from the medication dispensing system for three patients and did not document in the MAR or in the nurse's notes. This could have injured patients as other caretakers would go off her records and give more medication, potentially resulting in an overdose. Or if the patients did not receive the medications that they were prescribed by their physician, this could cause harm to the patient as they are not getting the medications they need for their conditions.

Professional Role was violated when the nurse showed up lacking fitness to practice, and did not manage supplies according to the hospital's protocols. The RN had impaired behavior due to substance abuse while working on the unit. This could have resulted in harm to patients due to the nurse having impaired critical thinking, decision making, and judgement during that time. Also, the RN failed to manage supplies according to the hospital's protocols. She did not follow medication wasting protocols which resulted in the misuse of medications.

- *Use the space below to describe what actions 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.*

The first action I would take if I witnessed a situation like this would be to notify the charge nurse or head nurse of the actions I observed. I would then contact the physicians of the patients to ensure they are aware of what had happened, so that they can assess their patients or provide any needed medical attention. I would also personally go and check on each patient affected, making sure their health and safety are priority. After I observed the patients and made sure there wasn't any harm done to them or their health, I would find Rhonda White and pull her aside to question her reasons for not following the facilities procedures and failing to give proper care to patients. Lastly, I would document everything I saw and did, as well as file an incident report against Rhonda White.