

I would like to take this reflection to talk about a particular experience with shift five which was one of the biggest learning experiences for me so far. We received report in the morning and when we were almost done, the night charge came back to stem cell and switched up patients between nurses, effectively doubling the length of report and generally making for a rocky but totally acceptable start. The patient that had been added to our docket was a woman with cancer that had metastasized all throughout her cervical spine causing pathological fractures and fusing. The patient had previously declined spinal surgery meaning that she would require a c-spine the rest of her life and she was in constant immense pain. She had a son at bedside who was very involved in care and patient with us and his mother. She insisted on taking all of her pills by herself and could only take one at a time and refused to drink anything besides lemon like gatorade. This led to her med rotation taking up to 30 minutes just for 4-6 pills. We focused heavily on cluster care due to her barely wanting to be moved due to her pain, this led to half an hour to one hour long bathing times plus lidocaine patch administration. Early in the shift her BP drops to 80s over 40s and that was very worrying so we talked to the doctor to see what we can do for it and all he gave us was NS@75ml which didn't touch her BP, in fact it kept dropping. We then consulted the other hospitalist for her and what he told us to do was discontinue the lidocaine patches, which was quite frustrating due to them being on her back which meant she would be in immense pain while we moved her and it did nothing for her BP. We finally decided to rapid response her and the rapid response nurse was able to convince the doctors to get albumin for her. Just as we expected, this completely fixed her BP to 120s over 80s. All while this is happening, we have transport nurses showing up and leaving within seconds of them calling us (i genuinely mean seconds). Dietary took six hours to send up tube feeding cartons. We had a discharge of a very eager man to get home and we had an admit. The day just stacked and stacked and stacked. I remember the only way I could describe it was that while Brenda and I didn't make any bad or wrong decisions, did everything we could possibly do, and nothing went completely wrong, I still never felt like I succeeded. Regardless, I still hugely benefitted from this experience and learned a lot about pushing through and relying on those around us. The floor had our back and thank the Lord for the rapid response nurse. Looking back I think that there were definitely some tasks that I should have just done on my own instead of being worried to do them without Brenda. If I had trusted my knowledge and skills we could have covered a bit more ground and things might not have piled up quite as badly. I think that even though it was a rough day, it wasn't a bad day, and I still enjoyed my work and we helped people. Next time I plan to really jump into the day and attack what I can on my own. These first 5 shifts have been an absolute blessing, especially when you consider that I've already gotten a job out of it. I am excited to keep working here.