

PMH Simulation Reflection

Please reflect on your experiences in simulation this week and reply to each item below. You may add anything else you wish. Submissions should be a **minimum** of 350 words total.

- Describe your feelings about your participation in the simulations this week.
During this week's simulation, my scenario involved caring for a young woman experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and she was having an acute anxiety episode. Going into the simulation, I felt very nervous because we have not yet covered PTSD in lecture, and I was not completely sure how to approach or help the patient. I was worried I would not know the right things to say or how to respond if the patient became triggered. However, when the simulation began, I felt more comfortable and confident and relied on the therapeutic communication skills we have been learning as well as what we have learned from previous lectures.
- How did it go compared to what you expected it to be like?
The experience went much better than I expected. I am very glad that we chose this scenario, because now we have a better understanding of PTSD and can help apply this to lecture whenever we dive deeper into it.
- What went well?
I think that we utilized teamwork by dividing responsibilities, supporting each other, and most of all making the patient feel as safe and understood as possible. I felt that our therapeutic communication made a big difference in helping the patient remain as calm as possible during her anxiety and PTSD episodes. For example, we asked her what would make her feel safer as well as some coping strategies whenever she is feeling this way and made sure to implement those the whole time we were in the room.
- What could have gone better?
If I could improve anything, I would try to be more confident in asking open-ended questions. I would also make sure to know my patient's triggers so that we can try our best to avoid them and make her feel safe while being in the hospital. For example, the patient did not like the sound that the scanner makes because it reminds her of the sound of a bomb, so I would manually enter the medications.
- Reflect on the scenario in which you were in the role of the patient or family member. How did that experience affect you?
I was not a patient or family member during any of the scenarios, but I did get to observe each one. One that really stood out to me, was the borderline personality disorder. I do not know much at all about this, so getting to see and hear what it is like

was very interesting. The nurses did an amazing job of not reacting behaviorally even whenever the patient was, they stayed the same during the many emotions and episodes that the patient was having. They did a very good job on trying to make the patient feel seen, safe, and comfortable. They used non-pharmacological techniques, like breathing exercises, to help the patient while waiting for the medications. I think something that I will always remember, especially whenever it comes to borderline personality disorder is to always be kind, no matter what the patient might be saying to you. We must remember that this is out of their control, but what we can control are our emotions, and it will make both ends feel more at ease when being kind. I am excited to learn more about this in lecture and am glad that I was able to be exposed and have a better understanding during simulation.

- How this week impact the way you feel about your ability to use therapeutic communication?

This week helped me grow in my ability to use therapeutic communication and made me more intentional with how I speak to my patients. It taught me to think before I speak and to consider how my words might affect someone who is in a vulnerable state. I also know that these therapeutic skills are not only essential in psychiatric nursing, but in all fields of nursing.

- Did this week change the way you think about mental health? If so, how?

This entire psych block has changed the way I view mental health. Not that I thought about it negatively before, but during clinical and lecture's I have learned that mental health is like any other disease that a person can have. By this, I mean that these are real conditions that are not always within a patient's control, and we must remember that as nurses. Whenever they are acting out behaviorally due to their mental illness, we need to remember that this is not in their control and do whatever we can to help them. I have learned that compassion, patience, and meeting people where they are at are key things to provide quality nursing care in all fields of nursing.

- How will you use the knowledge gained from this experience in your practice as a registered nurse?

I will use the knowledge gained from this simulation in my future nursing career by applying therapeutic communication skills with every patient I care for, not just those with mental health diagnoses. Through this simulation, we were able to create a safe and trusting environment where the patient felt heard and supported. It is very important to remain nonjudgemental when patients are experiencing distress. All these things are very easy to do and should be applied to every patient that we take care of, this is the least we could do.