

I am doing my preceptorship in the Pediatric ED, I really enjoyed my preceptorship experience. It was a great opportunity to not only learn and practice my skills, but also to see a variety of patients. I especially enjoyed working in pediatrics. I love working with children, and it was an amazing experience to help them. I was also able to work with my patients' parents, which was a great learning opportunity. During my preceptorship, I was able to develop my patient assessment skills, communication, and charting skills.

I had the opportunity to practice many initial patient assessments. We would be the first people to see the patient before the doctor, and we would do an initial focused assessment on the patient. It was different than working with adults because, instead of the patient telling you everything that is going on, it is the parents who give the backstory. As a result, I was able to practice how to communicate with the parents while keeping the patient involved. I got to practice a lot of respiratory assessments because many of our patients came in with viruses such as bronchiolitis or the flu. I also got a lot of experience working with patients with asthma and working with respiratory therapists to do breathing treatments.

One thing that I believe is really important in pediatrics is communication. In the ED we do a lot of things that can be really scary for kids, such as IV's, catheters, blood draws, etc. It was very important that we spoke to the patient before we started the procedure and explained things to them in a way that would be less scary. My preceptor would say things like, "The blood pressure cuff is just giving your arm a little hug". For IV starts, she would ask if they wanted to count or just start the IV, and then she would say, "there's just a little plastic straw in your arm." It was really interesting to see how they try to make everything less scary for the kids and I think they do a really good job of making the kids feel safe.

One patient that I had that stood out to me was a little boy who was being life-flighted to us because of respiratory distress. When he arrived, his lips were blue, and he was obviously having a hard time breathing; his neck was also very swollen. The doctor had gotten scans from the place that he was sent from, and he saw a mass on his chest, and his lymph nodes were so swollen that they were almost completely obstructing his airway. They took him to CT to get new scans, but when they got there, they were concerned that if they lay him down, he wouldn't be able to breathe. As a result, they brought down the Anesthesiologist and many other doctors to try to figure out what to do. When this was happening, the boy was sitting on the bed looking very scared, so I went and stood by him and tried to give him comfort. I knew that this was probably one of the most scary moments in his life and I wanted to make him feel a little less scared and more safe. Thankfully, he ended up being okay, and they were able to get his breathing under control, and he later started treatment.

Overall, I really enjoyed my preceptorship experience. My preceptor was amazing, she helped me develop my confidence and skills in a fast paced nursing environment. I enjoyed getting to see how the ED operates and how they adapt to working with children.