

Z-Chapter 12: Case Study

Thomas, an RN on a busy medical-surgical unit, is caring for 32 year-old Sofia who is a Hispanic female admitted with hypoglycemia. During patient rounding, Dr. Payne notes that Sofia has a glucose level of 42. He writes an order for an amp of D50 and a CXR. Upon completion of the orders, he hands the patient's chart to the unit coordinator.

Just as the patient is leaving for her x-ray, Anna, RN comes in to relieve Thomas for lunch. Thomas reports the following to Anna: patient is alert and oriented to self only. She has not spoken since admission and only nods when her name is called. Dr. Payne made rounds but did not report any changes in treatment for Sofia at this time. The unit coordinator did state that there was a new order for an x-ray and the patient has just been transported to the x-ray department by the orderly.

Ten minutes after receiving report, Anna receives a call from the x-ray tech who states they cannot perform the x-ray because the patient does not have an armband on and she is speaking in Spanish. Anna goes to the x-ray department and is unable to identify the patient, so she asks for a Spanish-speaking interpreter. The interpreter states that the patient is confused.

Anna returns Sofia to her room and checks the chart. She finds the new order for D50 and administers the medication immediately. The patient wakes up and is alert and oriented.

Questions:

- 1. Identify the team members involved in this scenario.

The team members involved in this scenario are Thomas, Anna, Dr. Payne, the unit coordinator, the orderly, the x-ray tech, and the interpreter.

- 2. Identify the errors which took place in this scenario.

One error that took place was that the order for D50 was not communicated to Anna. This caused a delay in treatment for the patient. Another error was that Anna should have gone in to see Sofia herself before allowing the orderly to take her to x-ray to ensure that she was stable for transport.

- 3. Identify what was done correctly in this scenario.

Something done correctly was that Anna got an interpreter to translate for Sofia so that she could provide her with the best care.

Another thing that was done correctly was immediately giving the patient the D50 after she realized it had been ordered.

- 4. If you were Thomas, what would you have done differently?

If I were Thomas, I would have checked any new orders before I left so that I could report them to Anna so she would be aware of things she needed to do immediately.

- 5. If you were Anna, what would you have done differently?

If I were Anna, I would have stopped the orderly from taking Sofia to x-ray before I had a chance to look at her. I would also check the orders to make sure that there was nothing urgent to do, which there was in this case.

- 6. In addition to the team members identified in the scenario, who are some individuals in the healthcare setting who must communicate with one another?

It is especially important that people communicate with one another when the patient is leaving to go somewhere else. For example, it would be important for a nurse to communicate the status of the patient to the imaging personnel if the patient were going to get an MRI. Since there is a temporary transfer of care, it is important to at least give the newest person responsible for the patient a rundown of their status. It is also important for the nurses to communicate with the orderlies. This is important so that they know what they can and cannot do with each patient based on whether they are stable or not. Since this can vary from patient to patient, communication is vital, especially for proper delegation.

- 7. What should you consider when communicating with others?

You should consider what the most pertinent information is and what the person needs to know about a situation to react accordingly and appropriately. You should also consider who the receiver of this information is. This determines whether someone is able to take over care, or even just if they understand what you are saying. For example, you would speak differently to another RN than you would to the wife of a hospitalized patient. You should consider your tone and body language as well. While your words might communicate one thing, your nonverbal cues might communicate another.

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