

Melinda Pickens
Unit 6: Workplace Issues
Z-Chapter 25
ONLINE CONTENT (1 H)

Unit Objectives:

- Determine your risk for encountering a workplace issue that can affect your health or well-being. (1,7)*
- Understand ergonomics and ways to protect yourself from workplace injuries. (5,7)*
- Analyze workplace bullying and harassment. (3,5)*
- Recognize the risk for violence at work and how to reduce your risk. (2,5,7)*
- Create a personal plan to handle workplace problems such as staffing shortages and being assigned to an unfamiliar workplace. (3,7)*

*Course Objectives

Case Studies

Due March 11, 2024 @ 0800 in the Z-CH # 25 dropbox

1. As a nursing student, Angie learned the proper handling of patients in her fundamentals course. During clinical rotation, Angie is assigned a patient with left-sided weakness related to a stroke and dementia. She reviews her notes on positioning, transferring, and handling a patient with musculoskeletal weakness. When entering the patient's room, Angie finds the patient halfway out of bed. She rushes to assist the patient to sit and immediately afterwards feels a sharp pain in her back. Subsequently, Angie has a herniated lumbar disk and is unable to continue nursing school.
 - a) How should Angie have approached moving this patient?
Instead of rushing over to the patient, Angie could have called for help and assessed the situation and ways to make it safe for her and another coworker to return Angie back to bed.
 - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?
Understood that the patient had left sided weakness due to stroke and was placed as a high fall risk. So Angie maintained the patient's safety and returned her back to bed.
 - c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.
Back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries because of the various position's nurses are in during a shift. This includes things such as toileting, turning, and providing various activities of daily living for patients. Also, the way patients rooms are positioned with machines/monitors can cause nurses to reach and stretch at nonergonomic positions ultimately causing risk for back injuries. Repetitive stress on these structures can cause small, repeated muscle and tendon damage that could result in a serious debilitating injury.

d) Describe how the “safe patient handling” legislation might have prevented the injury.

The safe patient handling is endorsed by the American Nurses Association which requires the department of labor to establish a standard of safe patient handling, mobility, and injury prevention to prevent musculoskeletal disorders for healthcare workers. The legislation might have prevented the injury, by having standards in place to follow for when these types of situations arise to help keep nurses safe and prevent strains on their backs.

2. Becky graduated from nursing school a year ago and since then, has worked on a neurology unit. Normally a happy and healthy person, Becky recently noticed that she always feels run down and is losing her hair. During the past year, she was told that her assessment skills were lacking because she missed an important finding on a patient while covering for another nurse. Her supervisor seemingly assigns her high-risk admits every time she works. Her co-workers complain that Becky always gets the lightest patient assignments and should take the admissions. Last week, she overheard another nurse saying, “Becky is almost useless. She spends so much time with her patients she can never help other nurses. “Becky feels physically ill every time she goes to work. She wonders if these “tests” of her nursing skills will ever end.

a) What type of violence is Becky experiencing?

Becky is experiencing lateral violence (bullying).

b) Which of the signs of bullying from Table 25-1 is (are) evidenced in this scenario?

- You may notice a pattern of your documents, files, other work-related items, or personal belongings going missing.
- You might be asked to do difficult or seemingly pointless tasks and be ridiculed or criticized when you can't get them done.

- It may seem like your work is frequently monitored, to the point where you begin to doubt yourself and have difficulty with your regular tasks.
 - You may be asked to do new tasks or tasks outside your typical duties without training or help even when you request it.
- c) What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace?
- 1.) Name it, openly state that you are being bullied.
 - 2.) Seek respite, check your mental and physical health, research legal options, gather data, and start a job search for a new position that will give you options to address your current work situation.
 - 3.) Expose the bully, such as writing a letter to your current employer to deal with the person bullying you and what has occurred.
- d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?
- Document your concerns, if the response isn't to your satisfaction, then tell them you are going to report your concerns to the next person in charge. Make sure not to threaten and use your notes if this incident is more continuous rather than intermittent.

3. Amanda is caring for an 82-year-old patient with a fractured hip and dementia. In the shift report, she learns that the patient becomes agitated and combative at night. During her evening shift assessment, Amanda notes that the patient does not know where she is or why Amanda is in her room. Amanda remembers her hospital training on dealing with agitated patients by using soothing tones when addressing the patient and ensuring a calm environment. During assessment, the patient yells that Amanda is killing her. She begins swinging at Amanda with the telephone, breaking her jaw. Amanda runs out of the room, and her co-worker calls a “Code White.”

a. What is a Code White, and how would it help in this situation?

Code white is used to signal a potentially dangerous person. In this situation it would help because once a code white is signaled properly trained people will come to that area and assist where needed. With the goal to deescalate the situation.

b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.

The patient has dementia and is not aware of where she is or why Amanda is in her room. The patient becomes agitated and combative at night. The patient yells and swings her telephone at Amanda.

c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?

The facility has a code white to deal with hostile situations. This allows for de-escalation of the situation and helps to keep both the patient and staff safe.

d. If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.

If Amanda were floated to another floor and this situation occurred Amanda would have either called her resource person for additional help and/or tried to remember what she would want done if it was her loved one in the hospital. I believe this would have changed how Amanda handled the situation, since it being a different floor than her normal, she would have asked for more help and been more cautious about entering the patient’s room and the care provided.

4. In reviewing available hospital employment, you identify three potential positions as a staff nurse in orthopedics. Because orthopedics is where you would like to work, you evaluate each of the positions:
- Position 1: A regional medical center, with a nurse to patient ratio of 5:1. Total patient care is expected of all nurses, and there is only one nursing assistant assigned to each unit. The hospital recently purchased safe handling equipment for every unit.
 - Position 2: An urban hospital with a nurse to patient ratio of 9:1. There is one nursing assistant assigned to every nurse. The hospital has new patient handling equipment, although it is shared between two units.
 - Position 3: a local hospital with a nurse to patient ratio 7:1. There is one nursing assistant for every nine patients. The hospital is moving toward Magnet status and uses a shared governance model.
- a) Explore each position in relation to your safety as a nurse. What are the benefits and detriments of each position?
- 1.) The patient to nurse ratio is lower, which is a benefit as well as safe handling equipment available on each unit. However, there is only one nursing assistant in the unit.
 - 2.) The detriments for position 2 are that there is a heavier patient load for the nurses as well as having to share safe handling equipment amongst two units. A benefit though is that each nurse has their own nursing assistant.
 - 3.) This hospital is moving toward magnet status and has moderate patient to nurse ratio which is a major benefit for nurses. As well as having a nursing assistant for every nine patients. A detriment is the patient ratio is higher

and having to also share a nursing assistant could cause issues down the line.

- b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?

Position 3 would provide the safest working environment. I picked the third position because it is working toward magnet status which helps to promote nurse autonomy as well as low patient to nurse ratios. As well as having an aid to every nine patients. This helps the nurses to delegate work as needed and focus on other important tasks for the patient and their health and safety.

- c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?

What happens when someone calls off and they are unable to put an aid with every nurse or with every nine patients? Are the nurses still required to take on the same number of patients or more? Do they utilize a team approach to caring for the patients when short staffed? How often do they float nurses and what is expected of them on other floors, and do they allow tours of that unit first? Is overtime mandated and if so how often can they mandate, and are their guidelines to mandating?

- d) The hospital in position 3 is described as working towards Magnet status. What impact might this have on your decision to accept or turn down an employment offer?

This might impact my decision to accept an offer for employment because this tells me that the hospital, I applied for is aware of nursing shortages and other problems and they are actively trying to fix the problem/find solutions. I am aware because of the magnet status this also allows me as a nurse to have more autonomy as well as better patient ratios, as well as collaborative relationships with physicians.

In order to receive full credit (1 H class time) for this assignment, it must be completed in its entirety by the due date/time assigned. Any assignments not completed in its entirety by the assigned due date and time will result in missed class time.