

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?

She should have called for assistance and also used some kind of assistive device that was nearby to help place the patient into bed. If neither of these were available to her, making sure that she uses a wide stance and not twisting at the waist but instead bending the legs.
 - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?

She made sure to review her notes on assisting a patient with musculoskeletal weakness and she also helped to prevent a fall from occurring.
 - c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.

It is one of the number one causes of injuries because it is easy to twist at the waist and usually the symptoms of pain do not occur until later in life, especially the configuration of patient rooms and placement of furniture, monitors, and equipment that require the nurse to stretch and reach in nonergonomic positions. People also do not use the proper body mechanics/know what the proper techniques are. People do not use the proper assistive devices or help.

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

It may have prevented the injury by establishing a standard on safe patient handling, mobility, and injury prevention to prevent musculoskeletal disorders for healthcare workers.

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?

She is experiencing lateral violence (bullying) in the workplace.

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

She has been left out of the office culture, she is asked to do tasks that are outside of her typical duties, her work is frequently monitored to the point that she begins to doubt herself and has difficulty with regular tasks, she is asked to do difficult tasks.

c) What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace?

Name it: say that she is being bullied and to validate it for her own sense of self. Seek respite: she needs to take time off work to “bullyproof” herself by checking her mental health, physical health, research state and federal legal options, gather data regarding the economic impact the bully has had on the unit, and start a job search for a new position because it

will give her more options as she addresses her current work situation.

Expose the bully: she needs to give the employer an opportunity to address the situation and expose the bully.

d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?

She can take the problem up the chain of command and if this is something that is not taken seriously, she is able to find a job elsewhere.

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 alerts all staff of a potentially violent situation. This is helpful in the situation because the patient has become violent and started yelling and swinging at the nurse and breaking her jaw.

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

The patient is 82, she has dementia and becomes combative and agitated at night, she does not know where she is and begins to raise her voice and swinging a telephone at the nurse.

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

The facility has a code white that can be alerted when situations like this arise and trained personnel come in and handle the situation to prevent harm from occurring.

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

No, it does not, if the nurse is in danger of being injured, then they need to follow hospital policy and either call a code white or call security to take care of the situation to prevent any further damage or injury to either person.

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?
- Position 1: There is new equipment that aid in safe handling and the patient ratios are reasonable. The downside is there is only one nursing assistant and all nursing care is expected to be done by the nurse as well as only equipment for the unit so it may not be enough.
- Position 2: There is a nurse assistant to every nurse and has new patient handling equipment. The downside is the nurse has a larger patient to nurse ratio and the equipment is shared between two units.
- Position 3: It is local and there is a nursing assistant to help with patients, they have a magnet status and use shared governance. The downside is the ratio is large and the aid takes care of more patients so they are not as readily available and shared governance can be hard sometimes with management issues.
- b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?
- I think that the first position has the safest working environment because the ratios are not as big and they have the new safe handling equipment that can be used when moving a patient and when need be, there is a nurse assistant that is on the floor.
- c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?
- How often are they short staffed, and when they are, how do they split up the patient to nurse ratios.
- 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 would have a positive impact on my decision because it is apparent that they are a hospital that is working toward excellence in their care for the patients through knowledge and innovation, which shows that they are going above and beyond what other places are and that it is attainable.

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.