

**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 assessed the situation and called for help or obtained proper assistive devices to prevent any potential injury.
  - b) **What did Angie do correctly in this situation?** She reviewed her notes on positioning, transferring, and handling a patient with musculoskeletal weakness.
  - c) **Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.** The heavy patient loads, short-staffed and not using proper assistive devices or not having them available to use. Also, the way patient rooms are set up nurses are having to reach in awkward angles. When a nurse hurts their back, it is debilitating they may need to take off work and leave work even shorter staffed, may need help with their own ADLs depending on the severity of the injury.
  - d) **Describe how the "safe patient handling" legislation might have prevented the injury.** There would be policies and procedures in place for safety of patients and healthcare workers. The staff would assess patients' mobility needs daily prior to shift start and plan accordingly prior to entering their rooms. Also, staff would be trained on assistive devices.

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?** Lateral Bullying
  - b) **Which of the signs of bullying from Table 25-1 is (are) evidenced in this scenario?** You might be asked to do difficult or seemingly pointless task 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 task. You may be asked to do new task or task outside of your typical duties without training or help even when you request it.
  - c) **What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace?** Say that you are being bullied. Seek respite, take time off work to check on yourself mentally and physically. Expose the bully, by informing your supervisor who is the problem to get it resolved.
  - d) **What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?** Take it to higher ups, seek out the director, HR etc.

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?** Violent Person, it would get appropriate staff to assist in the situation and hopefully de-escalate.
  - b. **Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.** Already having known the patient is agitated and combative during the night. The patient is now yelling and thinks they are in danger with the nurse. The patient then started swinging a telephone at the nurse.
  - c. **What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?** Prevention policies in place, performing regular risk assessments, enhancing security, establish clear reporting, and training if in a hostile situation.
  - d. **If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.** In a way yes, if another nurse was involved and she was responding to the situation she would want to get the nurse to safety then implement any training to deescalate the situation.

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?** For position 1, the nurse-to-patient ratio is the best out of all positions, but the detriment is having to provide patient care to all your patients essentially alone which creates some issues. Also, if the assistive devices are new when will you be trained on how to use them? For position 2, there are a lot of detriments including nurse to patient ratio is unsafe and having to share assistive device equipment with other units putting you and your patients at risk for injury. The positive is having a nursing assistant assigned to each nurse. For position 3, the nurse-to-patient ratio again is high, you may or may not have assistive devices available. The positive is having more nursing assistants to help.
  - b) **Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?** Position one. Although nursing assistants are sparse, you still have assistive devices available, and the nurse-to-patient ratio is the best and safest out of all positions.
  - c) **What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?** How do ratios in the organization compare with recommendations of national and regional-organizations, such as the American Organization of Nurse Executives and the Association of Critical Care Nurses? What is the frequency of floating to other nursing units? What resources does the organization use to supplement staff during peak census? If concerns arise about the adequacy of staffing, where and to whom is it appropriate to voice those concerns? How are overtime, on-call time and cancellation of regularly scheduled shifts handled?
  - 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?** Being a magnet status hospital, it attracts and retains top talent meaning increased nurse retention and lower nurse burnout, increased nurse satisfaction, and decreased nurse vacancy and nurse turnover rate. Also, it helps improve patient care, safety, and satisfaction by decreasing pressure ulcers, decreasing falls, decreased mortality rates thus patient safety and quality is improved. This would increase the chances of accepting a job when they are a magnet status facility.

*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.*