

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?
Angie should have used an assistive device to aid her in maneuvering the patient safely to the bed. When the patient was not at risk of falling, she should have then asked another worker to assist her in repositioning the patient. This patient has severe weakness and would have been putting most of their weight on Angie if she were to move them by herself.
 - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?
Angie's research on the patient was correct in looking at ways to transfer and reposition in the patient based on his deficit.
 - c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.
A nurse is often stretching and reaching in nonergonomic positions as they help a patient ambulate around objects in a room. They often experience a loss of flexibility and increased musculoskeletal instability due to increased age. The repetitive stress of turning, repositioning, and lifting patients puts stress on the back and causes increasing damage.

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

Angie would have been trained to use equipment and provide safe transfers for patients and prevent injuries to herself in the process. This would also cause her to assess the needs of her patient prior to seeing them to see what assistance they would need for ambulation and repositioning.

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.

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

Becky’s work is being frequently monitored, she is being assigned difficult tasks, and her coworkers are complaining and negatively talking about her.

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

Becky should validate herself by saying out loud that she is being bullied in the workplace. She should then seek respite from work and take the time to check her mental and physical health, research legal options, gather information regarding the impact the bullies have had on her unit, and start a job search for a new position. Becky should then expose the bullies and her concerns to her supervisor.

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

Becky can take the matter to her HR department and discuss ways to approach the matter with them. If she feels like it is still not being handled properly, she could seek out a new position on another floor or hospital.

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.”
- What is a Code White, and how would it help in this situation?
This alerts all staff to a violent situation and calls for resources to help deescalate the situation.
 - Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.
Amanda was notified that the patient had the tendency to become agitated and combative at night. When entering the room, the patient stated she was confused and was not sure why Amanda was in her room. This was an indication that the situation could escalate.
 - What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?
This facility had the Code White to deal with hostile situations.
 - If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.
I do not think it would have changed. She had attempted to use her prior training on dealing with agitated patients and used soothing tones when talking. This was ineffective and the situation escalated.
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.
 - Explore each position in relation to your safety as a nurse. What are the benefits and detriments of each position?

In position 1, the ratio for patient to nurses is lower and the hospital has new handling equipment. However, there is only one assistant for the floor and patient care is expected of all nurses. Position 2 has the highest ratio, but the nurse has their own nursing assistant for help. The hospital bought new equipment, but it is shared so it may not be there when it is needed. Position 3 has a higher ratio, but still has nursing assistants available on the unit. The hospital is moving towards a Magnet status which identifies it as overall a satisfactory employer.

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

I feel like position 3 would be the overall safest. The ratio is not too high to cause medical errors and there is still a nursing assistant available to assist with patients. Although the equipment is shared, the availability of safe handling equipment is important for both the staff and patient.

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

I would like to know if the nurse ever has to take on more than seven patients, if there is always enough nursing assistance available, and their solution if there is short staffing on the schedule.

- 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 cause me to consider their offer more due to the fact it would be known to have better relationships with their employees and invest in them more.

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.