Unit 1: Overview of Critical Care Nursing

ONLINE CONTENT (1H)

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Unit Objectives:

- Select appropriate nursing interventions to manage common problems and needs of critically ill patients. (1,6,)*
- Develop strategies to manage issues related to caregivers of critically ill patients. (1,2,6)*
- Apply the principles of hemodynamic monitoring to the nursing and interprofessional management of patients receiving monitoring. (1,2,6,7)*

*Course Objectives

Assignment:

Review- Unit 1: Overview of Critical Care Nursing PowerPoint.
Read the case study, then answer the case study questions below.

CASE STUDY

- Margaret Mayfield is a 62 year old female who has been admitted from the ED to the critical care unit, after calling 911 due to severe fatigue, weakness, and fever. Her past medical history includes: dwarfism, HTN, hyperlipidemia, diabetes mellitus, and has a chronic Foley catheter due to urinary retention. She lives alone in an apartment and has no family members. Her friend is her POA for healthcare, and is the only contact listed. She has a home health aide visit once a week to assist her with bathing and all of her meals are delivered from local take-out restaurants. She utilizes a walker at home, however reports she hasn't been out of bed for the last several days due to weakness and fever. She uses a private ambulance service to go to physician appointments; this is the only time she gets out of her apartment for the last three years. Home medications include carvedilol, simvastatin, aspirin, and insulin. She does not have her medications with her and does not know the doses.

Case Study Questions

- **As the critical care nurse caring for her, what overall concerns do you have?** One concern I have is her chronic Foley catheter. Her symptoms of fatigue, weakness, and fever can indicate an infection. Another concern is her living alone. If she is living alone, not leaving her home, and living a sedentary lifestyle, she is at risk of depression, clots, and decreased mobility. With her given health history, diabetes can increase her susceptibility to infections or impair healing, which can exacerbate her fatigue. Since she has diabetes and HTN, she should also restrict eating strictly from restaurants, as these meals can have negative consequences on her health.
- **Describe ways in which you would communicate with her and her POA for healthcare. Include what topics you would discuss at this time in her hospitalization.** The first thing I would do is establish rapport so trust can be gained between myself, the patient, and her POA. I would discuss her health history, current symptoms, pain rating, and any other contributing factors. I would also discuss her medications, nutritional status, and activity levels.
- **Discuss the ethical issues this case presents.** Due to Margaret's age and condition, she may not be able to make logical decisions regarding her health care. If she is overly fatigued, or too weak to think or speak, her condition may compromise it. Margaret's POA also needs to be assessed to ensure she is also able to make educated decisions. Another ethical concern is the fact Margaret lives alone, and an aide only checks on her once a week. If she gets assistance for bathing only once a week, there can be a debate regarding neglect or isolation.
- **Discuss the legal issues this case presents.** Margaret's living condition of eating food only from restaurants, bathing once a week, living alone, and being isolated and sedentary, raises a legal issue about her basic necessities not being met. This could fall into the category of neglect, and a healthcare provider may be required to report it.
- **In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret?** I would advocate contacting her physician or pharmacy to obtain an accurate medication list and proper doses. I would explain and provide information on her medications and the importance of compliance. I would inform her of the symptoms to the physician and explain my thoughts regarding a long-term catheter for someone who lives alone and the high risk of sepsis and

infection. If she only gets bathed once a week, the catheter is likely only getting cleaned once a week.

- **What other departments would you involve in her care, and why?** I could also collaborate with dietitians to evaluate her nutritional status, or physical therapy to help her with her immobility. She may need a follow-up appointment, and I could advocate for regular primary care visits due to her age and medical history.

Place your answers to these questions in the **"Unit 1: Overview CC dropbox" by 1/8/2025 at 0800.** Be prepared to share and discuss your thoughts in class.

In order to receive full credit (1 hour 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 will result in missed class time and must be completed by the end of the semester to pass the course.