

Unit 1: Overview of Critical Care Nursing

ONLINE CONTENT (1H)

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? She is at increased risk for infection due to having a chronic catheter in place putting her at higher risk for a UTI. Her symptoms of weakness, fatigue, and fever could all indicate that she may have an infection or even sepsis. Another concern could be a possible DVT or PE due to prolonged immobilization, as well as putting her at risk for pneumonia.
- ▶ 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. I would try and communicate with Margaret or her POA using a calm and clear manner, trying to explain things in simpler terms in order for them to understand clearly what may be going on. Some topics I would discuss with them would include a healthier diet plan, possible risks such as sepsis or diabetic complications, the importance of getting up and moving around, and discharge teaching including things like having a home health nurse possibly, since Margaret is living alone.
- ▶ Discuss the ethical issues this case presents. An ethical issue this case presents could include autonomy. Margaret is old enough to make her own decisions, however since she is having severe fatigue, fever and weakness, her ability to make her own health care decisions may be impaired.
- ▶ Discuss the legal issues this case presents. A possible legal issue could include that her POA is a friend rather than a relative. Since she is Margaret's POA, it is important she fully understands that role and what it entails, including making end of life decisions if Margaret's condition worsens.
- ▶ In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret? Some ways I would serve as an advocate for Margaret is by ensuring proper consent. Since Margaret's decision making may be impaired, I would make sure that her POA is informed as well, and all care is thoroughly explained to the both of them. Another thing I would advocate for is proper care and resources such as having a home health nurse stay with her at her home rather than an aide that only comes to see her once a week. This would be essential since it seems Margaret is not taking care of herself like she should and lacks proper resources.
- ▶ What other departments would you involve in her care, and why? Social workers may be involved since she has a lack of support and is unable to get the proper nutrition or care she needs. Dietary may be involved since she

relies on take-out food typically, and with her HTN and hyperlipidemia it is important to get proper nutrition. Another department involved could be PT or OT since she is having difficulty getting up and moving around. Prolonged bed rest can cause many complications that can worsen her conditions.

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.