

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

Review chapter 25 and place your answers to the following questions in the Z-Chapter 25 dropbox by 0800 on 3/10/2025.

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 just stayed near the patient and called for help. Having someone extra there to help her could have saved her the trouble of becoming hurt.**
 - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation? **Angie reviewed notes on positioning, transferring, and handling a patient with musculoskeletal weakness. Reviewing her notes shows she is competent in knowing that a patient with a stroke and dementia may have weakness.**
 - c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care. **Back problems are the number one cause of injuries due to poor body mechanics and the frequent moving of patients. Subsequent effects on nursing care includes work restrictions due to the injury and needing to have time off to recover/heal as well as providing a lower quality of care. With an injury, you are unable to provide all the care needed for a patient, especially if you can't move your back due to an injury.**
 - d) Describe how the "safe patient handling" legislation might have prevented the injury. **The "safe patient handling" legislation is used to ensure that healthcare workers are free from injury by using the right tools,**

techniques, and support when moving or repositioning patients. If Angie would have used the appropriate tools/help, then she probably would not have injured herself moving the patient.

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 (bullying).**
 - b) Which of the signs of bullying from Table 25-1 is (are) evidenced in this scenario? **She is being asked to do difficult tasks and she is being asked to do tasks outside of her typical duties, given all the high risk admits.**
 - c) What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace? **She could visit websites that have helpful information and resources/assistance, work with a counselor to develop a plan of action, possibly find another job with people she can relate to and get along with and go to her supervisor.**
 - d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns? **She could possibly file a complaint with HR if the supervisor is no help, seek counseling, and possibly relocate to another 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.”

- a. What is a Code White, and how would it help in this situation? **A code white is used when there is a violent or aggressive patient that poses a threat to others. It would help in this situation because others, such as security would come help Amanda out with the situation.**
 - b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation. **The patient has dementia. This is threatening because the patient is very confused and unaware of what is going on, causing her to become violent. Amanda knew the patient was more agitated and combative at night, so Amanda should have known this may happen. The patient is swinging at Amanda stating she is trying to kill her.**
 - c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations? **The nurses/staff have techniques they can use to try and de-escalate the situation, such as using soothing tones. The facility also has code white in place so that other staff members such as security are able to help with the 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. **It could possibly change her approach. For example, if she were floated to a psychiatric floor they could have been better equipped to deal with these types of patients.**
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? **Benefits for position 1: better and lower nurse to patient ratio, recently purchased safe handling equipment for every unit, more time to focus on each patient individually. Detriment for position 1: only one nursing assistant assigned to each unit, being on an orthopedic unit, the patients may need more assistance with moving. Benefits**

for position 2: having an assigned nursing assistant to every nurse on the unit to reduce the workload for the nurses since it is a 9:1 ratio, and new patient handling equipment. Detriments for position 2: nurse patient ratio is 9:1 making it extremely hard to provide all the care necessary to each patient and having to share equipment between units. Benefits for position 3: shared governance model, providing more autonomy and nurse patient ratio is alright being 7:1, better care can be provided than in position 2. Detriments for position 3: hospital is in the process of a new transition to magnet status and only one nursing assistant for every 9 patients.

- b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response? Position one provides the safest working environment. Even though there is only one nursing assistant on each unit, the nurses are able to better care for each patient since the ratio is only 5:1.
- c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing? What the nursing turnover rates are, asking about the workplace support available and what the culture there is like.
- 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? While magnet status can be good, the hospital is in transition to this status, so there could be lots of changes that may make me turn down the job.

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.