

**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 kept her back straight and bent her knees to move the patient, not use her back to move her.**
  - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?  
**Angie quickly responded to the situation and was able to get the patient back in bed without the patient hurting themselves.**
  - c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.  
**They are the number one cause of injuries because nurses are constantly taking care of patients who are not able to move on their own or they have unsteady gaits, so the nurses have to do all the moving for them. It causes a lot of nurses to be out sick because they pull a muscle in their back and they can't provide the care for the patient.**
  - d) Describe how the "safe patient handling" legislation might have prevented the injury.  
**It could have prevented the injury by mandating a mechanical lifting device for the nurse to use with 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?

**Lateral violence**

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

**It may seem like your work is frequently monitored, to the point where you begin to doubt yourself and have difficulty with your regular tasks**

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

**1. Name it.**

**2. Seek respite.**

**3. Expose the bully.**

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

**Becky can go above her supervisor’s head to the next person in charge about her problems.**

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 where a patient is acting aggressively or violently and is becoming a threat, so it alerts security to de-escalate the situation.**
  - b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.  
**Patient is confused and has the telephone, a potential weapon.**
  - c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?  
**They have codes, training for employees to identify signs, secure “safe” rooms, and therapeutic communication techniques.**
  - d. If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.  
**Yes because if another patient has that history, she could potentially bring another nurse or aide in with her when goes to assess the patient at night. She is probably also going to keep a safe distance, in order not to be hit.**
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?  
**Position 1: benefit = safe handling equipment, detriment = patient ratio, total patient care from the nurse, one nursing assistant**  
**Position 2: benefit = nursing assistant for each nurse, new equipment, detriment = patient ration, shared equipment**  
**Position 3: benefit = Magnet status and a shared governance model, detriment = patient ration, one nursing assistant for every nine patients**
  - b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?

**Position 1 is the safest because the patient ratio is the smallest and there is new equipment for the nurse to use. It will be easier for the nurse to notice something wrong with her patient if she doesn't have as many patients.**

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

**How many nurses are there per shift?**

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?

**It might affect my decision to accept because this means the nurses have a good reputation at this hospital and these are going to be my coworkers.**

*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.*