

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 gotten help before assisting the patient back to bed. While patient safety is a top priority, it is essential to keep yourself safe so you can continue to care for patients.
 - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?
Angie prepared herself by researching the patient's medical history and reviewing her notes. She was right to assist the patient, however, she needed an extra set of hands.
 - c) Explain why back problems are the number one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.
Nurses perform many duties that pose a risk for back injuries including turning, repositioning, and transferring. Nurses who injury their back risk debilitating injury that could end their career.
 - d) Describe how the "safe patient handling" legislation might have prevented the injury.
Legislation would require the establishment of a standard on safe patient handling, mobility, and injury prevention. This includes determining

mobility needs of each patient and providing education on mobility equipment.

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 which is defined as abuse that occurs between individuals who are on the same level in terms of their job responsibilities. Becky’s coworkers are complaining about her and gossiping behind her back.
 - b) Which of the signs of bullying from Table 25-1 is (are) evidenced in this scenario?

Becky feels as though her work is continually monitored. She is asked to do difficult tasks and is criticized when she can’t get them done.
 - c) What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace?

Becky can start by admitting to herself that she is being bullied which will validate her experience. She should seek time away as respite to check on her mental and physical health. Lastly, she should expose to her superiors that she is being bullied and gives them an opportunity to address it.
 - d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?

If Becky feels as though her superiors are not handling the situation properly, and the situation is leaving Becky mental drained, she should consider finding different employment. Although it is disappointing to have to leave a job due to bullying, Becky is not feeling like herself, she is runed down, losing hair, and feeling ill every time she goes to work.
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 alerts staff to a potentially violent situation. In this situation, it would have ensured that proper resources were available to Amanda.

- b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.

During this situation, the patient was agitated and combative. In addition, the patient was confused as she didn't know where she was and who Amanda was.

- c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?

Facilities typically have a security department that can aid healthcare workers in hostile situations. In addition, 2 or 3 healthcare workers can assist each other with a patient they have concerns with.

- d. If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.

A hospital should have standardized policies regarding the safety of patients and staff. A nurse should generally expect the same procedures regardless of what floor they are working on.

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?

1. Benefits include smaller nurse to patient ratio and safe handling equipment supplied on each floor. Detriments include total patient care being expected of all nurses and only one nursing aid per floor
2. Benefits include a nurse aid assigned to each nurse and new patient handling equipment. Detriments include high nurse to patient ratio and patient handling equipment shared between units.

3. Benefits include moderate nurse to patient ratio and facility striving for magnet status. Determents include one nurse aid to 9 patients.
- b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?
I believe that the first option provides for the safest working environment due to its smallest nurse to patient ratio. Although the nurse has more responsibilities regarding the patients, they have less patients to manage. In addition, the unit has assistive equipment readily available and a nursing aid for assistance if needed.
- c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?
How many nurses are typically staffed on the floor?
Is the position of the nurse aid staffed well?
Is there an education department assessable if I have questions?
Is management willing to help the floor nurses?
- 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?
Knowing a facility has magnet status would play a role in my decision. A hospital with magnet status will have a lower turnover rate, place value on education, and have adequate leaders.

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.