

**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've ensured the patient was stable and secured from falling by maintaining them in a somewhat secure position and called for assistance via the Call Button from either a PCT or another RN.
  - b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?
    - Angie rushing to assist the patient to ensure the patient safety was correct on her part. However, this ultimately could've been avoided by ensuring the bed was in the lowest position, both of the side rails were up, and initiating and maintaining the bed alarm.
  - 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 nurse injuries due to incorrectly lifting of patients as well as inadequate assistance and/or transferring equipment. Overall, this leads to a compromise

within patient care due to inefficient performing of tasks due to back pain and discomfort.

d) Describe how the “safe patient handling” legislation might have prevented the injury.

- The “Safe Patient Handling” Legislation could have prevented the injury by her utilizing a transfer belt and/or whatever assistive devices the facility had to offer.

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?

- “You may be asked to do new tasks or tasks outside your typical duties without training or help even when you request it.”
- “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.”
- “You might be asked to do difficult or seemingly pointless tasks and be ridiculed or criticized when you can’t get them done.”

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

- “Name It” = Stating she’s being bullied
- “Seek Respite” = Take time off to “Bullyproof” yourself
- “Expose the Bully”

- d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?
- If Becky informs her supervisor and the supervisor brushes it off, she needs to go up the chain and inform her supervisor's supervisor that she is experiencing bullying and nothing is being done about it and she's not being heard.
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 when a patient or visitor is being aggressive and/or violent towards healthcare personnel. This would help in the situation by drawing attention to and having a handful of healthcare personnel to de-escalate, restrain, or even sedate depending on the person.
- b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.
- The patient is 82 years old
  - The patient is currently experiencing Dementia
  - The patient has a fractured hip which can lead to agitation due to being stuck in a hospital bed and/or from pain
  - "The patient becomes agitated and combative at night"
- c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?
- The facility has the "Code White" protocol in place to deal with aggressive and/or combative patients, families, visitors, etc.
- d. If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.
- Personally, I think Amanda approach the situation the best way she knew how. If she were floated to another floor, I don't think she would have been as confident when dealing with the combative patient being that she isn't familiar with said floor and potentially wouldn't have been as

confident when addressing said patient. Nurses that float outside of their familiar territory are prone to experiencing an increase in patient care errors due to anxiety and unfamiliarity.

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: Has a nurse-to-patient ratio of 5:1. This is beneficial to the nurse because it allows more intricate patient care which would reduce medical errors compared to the others. However, this can be detrimental because this could potentially create delays in patient care for patients who are admitted via emergency, which would cause them to have to wait to be cared for.
  - Position 2: Has a nurse-to-patient ratio of 9:1. This is beneficial to the facility being that this route would require less nurses. However, this can be detrimental because this could potentially mean there would be a reduction when it comes to the quality of patient care.
  - Position 3: Has a nurse-to-patient ratio of 7:1. This is beneficial to the nurse as well as the facility being that this leaves room for a possible lower patient admittance, which would allow for whatever nurse that has fewer patients to help their coworkers with their full 7:1. However, this can be detrimental because similarly to Position 2, this could potentially mean a reduction within the quality of patient care.

- b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?
- Personally, I think position one provides the safest work environment because it allows the nurse some flexibility when it comes to providing care, care planning, and the overall workload with their patients.
- c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?
- Diversity within the current staffing and/or when hiring new staff?
  - Is there a plan in place for staffing shortages? (if someone were to call off and/or no call no show)
  - Does the facility allow for flexibility when it comes to scheduling and/or if one of their staff members encountered an emergency?
- 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?
- This would definitely influence my decision to accept the employment offer being that “Magnet Status” entails high satisfactory when it comes to the facility, leadership, employees, and it’s overall reputation.

*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.*