

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 asked a coworker for help. She should have assessed the patient's abilities, stood on the patient's strong side, and used a gait belt for stability.

b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?

Angie did good by reviewing her notes on positioning, transferring, and handling a patient with musculoskeletal weakness and rushing to assist her before falling out of bed.

c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.

Back problems are a number one cause of injuries because nurses are required to lift, transfer, reposition, and support patients, and they often do it without assistance or proper lifting techniques. This causes missed work, less efficient work, and physical/emotional stress of the body.

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

Safe patient handling legislation might have prevented the injury because it mandates workers to use proper technique and assistive devices to help move patients. It also calls for a safer work environment with more help

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/bullying

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

- left out of office culture, such as chitchat, parties, or team lunches
- asked to do new tasks or tasks outside your typical duties without training or help even when you request it
- 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?

1. Name it
2. Seek respite
3. Expose the bully

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

According to the chain of command, you contact your manager, then the director for the department, then the chief nursing officer. With each step in the process of reporting, remain focused on the issues, present the facts, offer suggestions for resolution, and remain respectful and professional.

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, or sometimes gray, alerts all staff of a potentially violent situation. Anyone can initiate the code if somebody becomes loud or abusive, makes threats, or acts in a physically threatening and harmful manner.

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

- The patient swings at Amanda with a telephone and breaks her jaw
- The patient is agitated and combative

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

- Have workers learn to recognize escalating or violent behavior
- Never work with a violent patient alone
- A security teams

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

Amanda should not have gone in alone to see the patient, if she were on another floor, she might have had extra help.

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: This is the safest ratio because the nurse has more time to assess and care for each person and always has available equipment, but there is less help/

2: Although the ratio is much bigger it would be a big help to have an assistant that helps only you, and you can delegate all work that you are not able to complete on your own, but it will be harder to get a hold of proper equipment.

3: This ratio is in between the other two and there is more help than 1 but less than two. This hospital moving towards Magnet status though and this will benefit nurses in many ways.

b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?

I think position 1 has the safest work environment because nurses have more time to assess patient needs and plan care, and they also have safe handling equipment that is the most accessible.

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

- What are the policies regarding delegation?
- What resources are available during a shift?
- How long are shifts? Lunch breaks, etc.?
- Are critical patients evenly assigned?

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 have an impact on my decision. It might help convince me to accept it because I want to work in a positive work environment that helps nurses do better. I want a job that wants to me to succeed.

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.