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 form 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?
    She should have used proper body mechanics when assisting the patient back into bed.
    b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?
    She immediately went to assist the patient back into bed after noticing the patient was halfway out of the bed.
    c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.
    Health care workers feel rushed and try to cut corners. When cutting corners by not using proper body mechanics your body can suffer.
    d) Describe how the "safe patient handling" legislation might have prevented the injury.
    The hospitals provide mechanical lifting devices and must provide equipment to assist with proper patient handling. This law has reduced MS disorders and patient handling injuries for hospital workers.

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?
       Horizontal violence
    b) Which of the signs of bullying from Table 25-1 is (are) evidenced in this scenario?
       -frequently monitored work
       -asked to do difficult or seemingly pointless tasks and be ridiculed or criticized when you cant get them done
    c) What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace?
       -pull colleagues aside and speak with them
       -speak to her supervisor and voice how she is feeling
       -politely confront the bullies and tell them their actions are not tolerated
    d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?
       Follow chain of command

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?
    An emergency response to a violent or aggressive situation. Give the patient time alone (if applicable), and have a colleague assist the worker during the next time for care. This code alerts the hospital that there is a challenging situation and to be extra cautions when going in the room to provide care.
    b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.
    -dementia due to AMS, especially during evening hours d/t sundowning
    -workers jaw is broken
    -fractured hip, if patient moves the wrong way, the injury could worsen.
    c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?
    -calling a code white
    -hospital training
    d. If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.
    If the patient was axox4 the situation would be different on how the worker would approach the care. With dementia, you want to frequently remind the patients on what you are doing and to be cautious on the words that you are using. You want to break everything up in simple tasks so the patient doesn't become overwhelmed. Dementia patients have a hard time expressing themselves, and unfortunately it results in physical "abuse."

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.) Safety risk. Nurse is responsible for nursing duties as well as all patient care. Only 1 stna per the unit. I don't see a benefit in this scenario. I feel like there is too much expected on one nurse. License could be in jeopardy.
            2.) There is 1 stna per every nurse. Nurse can focus on nursing duties while she is paired with a stna. However, the equipment is shared between 2 units. Care can be delayed based on time of needing the equipment
            3.) Nurse has a stna for every 9 patients. Hospital is moving toward magnet status and will have their nurses go back to school for higher education. A pro- is the shared governance model d/t it being a collaborative model that involves nurses and leaders in decision making.
        b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?

Position 3. Nurse has a stna for every 9 patients. Hospital is moving toward magnet status and will have their nurses go back to school for higher education. A pro- is the shared governance model d/t it being a collaborative model that involves nurses and leaders in decision making.

        c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?
            -use of safety equipment and if there is a lift team
            -the nursing injury rate on the unit
            -is there housekeeping and what they are responsible for
            -nurse to pt ratio & stna to pt ratio
            -is there PRN staff?
            -what to do if you need to c/o and cannot find coverage
            -holiday rotations
        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?

Depends on if that nurse wants to go back to school for a higher education and if the hospital will pay for their schooling or offer tuition reimbursement.

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.