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?
        a. Angie should have approached this patient and stopped them where they were. The patient was not out of bed and Angie should have called for assistance while waiting with the patient rather than moving them herself because due to the left-sided weakness, the patient more than likely needed more assistance than what Angie could have provided on her own.
    b) What did Angie do correctly in this situation?
        a. What Angie did correctly was quickly getting to the patient in order to prevent them from falling. She also did a great job of reviewing proper body mechanics, however, she did not use them.
    c) Explain why back problems are the number-one cause of nurse injuries and describe the subsequent effects on nursing care.
        a. Back problems are the number one issue due to the daily tasks we as nurses have to perform such as turning, positioning, toileting, ADL's, feeding, etc. These are require repetitive movements and we can often forget to make sure we are doing these comfortably.

These can lead to career ending injuries as we age thus leading to an increase in the amount of hospitals that are understaffed.

d) Describe how the “safe patient handling” legislation might have prevented the injury.
    a. This legislation allows there to be proper standards put in place such as proper equipment in order to keep staff safe from injuries that can be prevented. This would be through usage of a hoyer lift, gate belts, elevating the bed, usage of mobility aides, and so many other things we use every day.

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?
        a. Becky is experiencing later violence from her coworkers.
    b) Which of the signs of bullying from Table 25-1 is (are) evidenced in this scenario?
        a. Being assigned a high-level assignment
        b. Being frequently monitored by coworkers
        c. Being left out of chitchat
        d. Being criticized for her work ethic
    c) What steps can Becky take to minimize bullying in the workplace?
        a. Name it: Use self-talk to validate your personal experience
        b. Seek respite: Take some time off of work in order to figure things out for yourself such how to handle this or if a new job will be better for you.
        c. Expose the bully: Allow your employer to help you in addressing this situation to fix it.
    d) What can Becky do if her supervisor brushes off her concerns?
        a. What Becky can do is continue to express her concern to her supervisor and if change does not occur, then it may be best to take

some time to consider her option and possibly look for a new job if the change is not going to happen.

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?
        i. A code white is called when someone is being aggressive or threatening towards staff or someone. This can be helpful in order to get the patient restrained or calmed down and get Amanda the help she needs safely.
    b. Identify elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation.
        i. Elements of this case that signal a potentially threatening situation include that the patients has a history of becoming agitated and aggressive at night. This can be especially true with her being in an unfamiliar place with unfamiliar people.
    c. What preventive measures does the facility have in place to deal with hostile situations?
        i. Preventative measures that he facility has in place to deal with hostile situation includes restraints, security, and medications. All of these can come into play when it comes to an aggressive patient.
    d. If Amanda were floated to another floor where this situation occurred, would this change how she should approach the situation? Explain your answer.
        i. I do not think this would change the way Amanda approached this situation because she was using her critical thinking skills and did what she was told to do initially in order to help soothe the patient.

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?
            a. Position 1 has a good nurse to patient ratio however, there is only one nursing assistant and all care is all expected of the nurse so the job could be heavy. This hospital also just received new equipment for each unit which is very helpful for safety precautions.
            b. Position 2 has the heaviest of a nurse to patient ratio, but each nurse has an assistant so this may be more manageable with delegating bathing, toileting, and feeding to the assistant. This new equipment shared between two units so it may be hard to come by when needed.
            c. Position 3 has a moderately heavy nurse to patient ratio and it also has an aide for a group of 9 patients. This shared governance model in order to promote the staff to pick the best safety equipment for their patients which can be very beneficial!
        b) Which position provides the safest working environment? Explain your response?
            a. In my opinion, position 1 is the best option for the safest environment. The nurses have only 5 patients compared to 7 or 9, meaning that they will be able to closely care for each patient better. Although there is one nursing assistant, the nurses still have some help with the tasks that they need to be done. This job also has safety equipment for each unit which is very beneficial considering there is only one nursing assistant so this equipment will not be hard to find and put to use.
        c) What additional questions should be asked in relation to staffing?
            a. I would ask what the patient acuity is. If the patients are very unstable or they are stable, that plays a big role in the amount of patient's a nurse can handle. I would also ask what level of skill and knowledge the nursing assistants will have so I can safely delegate tasks and also

what is expected of me. I would like to know if I will be dealing with surgery patient's, geriatric patient's, pediatrics, etc. because this also makes a big change in what I can handle as a nurse.

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?
    a. The patient to nurse ratio may make or break my acceptance of the job. A common reason things go wrong in the medical field is because someone missed something or did not pay close enough attention. This can lead to fatalities or harm to a patient leading to even worse things such as lawsuits or loss of licensure. If the patient to nurse ratio was 1:5 or something closer to that, then I may be more willing as this seems safer to me and for my patients so they receive optimal care. This will also lead to less mistakes as I will have more time ot focus on one patient at a time.

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.