

Unit 1: Overview of Critical Care Nursing

ONLINE CONTENT (1H)

Mallory Jamison

Unit Objectives:

- Select appropriate nursing interventions to manage common problems and needs of critically ill patients. (1,6,)*
- Develop strategies to manage issues related to caregivers of critically ill patients. (1,2,6)*
- Apply the principles of hemodynamic monitoring to the nursing and interprofessional management of patients receiving monitoring. (1,2,6,7)*

*Course Objectives

Assignment:

Review- Unit 1: Overview of Critical Care Nursing PowerPoint.

Read the case study, then answer the case study questions below.

CASE STUDY

- ▶ Margaret Mayfield is a 62 year old female who has been admitted from the ED to the critical care unit, after calling 911 due to severe fatigue, weakness, and fever. Her past medical history includes: dwarfism, HTN, hyperlipidemia, diabetes mellitus, and has a chronic Foley catheter due to urinary retention. She lives alone in an apartment and has no family members. Her friend is her POA for healthcare, and is the only contact listed. She has a home health aide visit once a week to assist her with bathing and all of her meals are delivered from local take-out restaurants. She utilizes a walker at home, however reports she hasn't been out of bed for the last several days due to weakness and fever. She uses a private ambulance service to go to physician appointments; this is the only time she gets out of her apartment for the last three years. Home medications include carvedilol, simvastatin, aspirin, and insulin. She does not have her medications with her and does not know the doses.

Case Study Questions

- ▶ As the critical care nurse caring for her, what overall concerns do you have?
My overall concerns for Margaret are the many risk factors that she has for her current health status, such as a chronic catheter which could have caused an infection that would explain fatigue, weakness, and fever. It is also a concern that she lives alone with no family members,

because that means she has limited help or individuals to notice that something is wrong with her health. I also find it concerning that she has meals delivered from restaurants because her diet may not be very healthy to manage her diabetes, hyperlipidemia, or hypertension. It is also concerning that she has not been out of bed because she can get blood clots or bed sores, along with the fact that she only leaves for appointments because this means her physical activity is very limited and can lead to complications of her conditions.

- ▶ **Describe ways in which you would communicate with her and her POA for healthcare. Include what topics you would discuss at this time in her hospitalization. I would bring the POA into the room and talk to her and Margaret together. First, I would discuss whether there are any friends or anyone in either of their lives that could help with Margaret's care, so that Margaret receives more help than just the home health aide to improve her health outcomes. Also, this would make all the responsibility and information less overwhelming for the POA since she is the only contact listed. I would then talk to the POA privately and ask her if she knows Margaret's medication doses, so that we can begin medicating Margaret accordingly. After speaking to the two on these topics I would speak to both of them about a medical history to try and narrow down why she is experiencing these symptoms, such as a diet history, intake and output history, and how often she does catheter care.**
- ▶ **Discuss the ethical issues this case presents. This case presents the ethical issue of Margaret living alone with no family, and her POA being the only contact listed. This is an ethical issue because with the limited resources/support that Margaret has, this means that she has less help in which her health outcomes decline. In addition, with the POA being the only contact listed and there being no family members, this also poses the issue of the POA having further responsibilities and pressure placed on them which would further decline Margaret's health outcomes if the POA does not have adequate help or support to help Margaret.**
- ▶ **Discuss the legal issues this case presents. This case presents the legal issue of Margaret not having been out of bed for several days and only leaving her apartment for appointments. This is a legal issue because Margaret has a home health aide that visits once a week but appears to get very limited physical activity. With that being said, Margaret is more prone to bed sores or impaired physical mobility which could fall on the fault of the home health aide if they are not adequately repositioning Margaret or getting her up.**

- ▶ In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret? **I will serve as an advocate for Margaret by encouraging her to do range of motion exercises and assisting her in walking the halls of the hospital when her condition allows to get her some physical activity. I will also advocate in helping her order her meals from dietary with recommending healthier options, since she may not have a very healthy diet from eating take out so often. I will also advocate for Margaret by discussing with the POA whether she could possibly stop at Margaret’s house weekly to help her get some exercise or present some resources to Margaret and the POA that could help with such.**
- ▶ What other departments would you involve in her care, and why? **I would involve physical therapy and occupational therapy to help Margaret get some physical activity since she has such limited at home. These departments can also help her build her strength back up since she is experiencing weakness. I would also involve a dietician to help her with ordering healthy options from takeout restaurants along with ensuring that she is eating healthily in the hospital. A last department I would involve in Margaret’s care is case management, who can help Margaret with resources such as receiving further help with activities of daily living and physical activity at home, since the home health aide only visits once a week.**

Place your answers to these questions in the “Unit 1: Overview CC dropbox” by 1/7/2026 at 0800. Be prepared to share and discuss your thoughts in class.

In order to receive full credit (1 hour 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 will result in missed class time and must be completed by the end of the semester to pass the course.