

Unit 1: Overview of Critical Care Nursing

ONLINE CONTENT (1H)

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?
Some of my overall concerns for this patient would be Margaret having an infection. This is my concern due to the fever, history of diabetes, and the chronic foley. She also lives alone and is not getting the proper assistance with hygiene or ambulation.
- ▶ 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 be communicating with her and her POA in a calm, settle, and understandable voice so they can understand some of the reasons Margaret is getting sick. I would be discussing the proper need for hygiene and how this is very important especially since the patient has diabetes mellitus. Also discussing that her not getting out of bed could be causing the urine in her foley to back up into her body if not being discarded properly. I would also talk about the importance of going to her appointments due to her age, history of HTN, hyperlipidemia, and DM to make sure everything is being controlled or checked up on to not cause more issues in her body. And mostly explain the importance of knowing which medications she's on or keeping a list of the medications in case of emergency.
- ▶ Discuss the ethical issues this case presents.
Some of the ethical issues in this case would her friend being her only contact or POA. I think this is an issue due to the risks of potential conflicts that could happen in the friendship, Margaret may feel as a burden and not ask her friend for help, there is a lack of oversight or help to ake decisions for Margaret, if the friend is unavailable, or overwhelmed with handling the situation then this could delay crucial decisions that need made for the patients.
- ▶ Discuss the legal issues this case presents.
Some legal issues could form if the POA is unavailable and important information needs filled out or signed if the patient is unconscious. Other legal issues could be lack of education of the patient could then lead to inadequate treatments that need done or conditions that need checked up on.
- ▶ In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret?
I will serve as an advocate for Margaret by giving clear communication about education, protecting and reassuring the rights of the patients and the POA, listening to what the patient wants or needs, and supporting the patient

while she may not have any family support that is needed during this situation.

- ▶ What other departments would you involve in her care, and why?
I could involve laboratory for proper testing about the possible infection, clinical teams such as the doctor, patient advocates to help understand rights, therapy to learn better ways to move your body when feeling sick, spiritual care to provide support.

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.