

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?
As the nursing working with this patient, I would be concerned about her symptoms the most. Having a fever, severe weakness, and fatigue could potentially mean that she has a life-threatening infection. I would also be concerned if she is taking her medication right since she does not seem to know much about her doses. It makes me wonder if she understands the time of day and how much she should take. I am also concerned that she has not gotten out of bed in a few days, and that she has a very little support system. I also think that once a week is not enough for bathing if she is not getting up herself since she has a chronic foley, it could become infected.
- ▶ 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 first introduce myself as her nurse and state what I am concerned about. I would ask her POA if she is able to go to her apartment and grab her medications so that the doctor could prescribe her the correct doses while she is in the hospital. I would also communicate that I think it would be better for her if someone could help her with her bathing more frequently to prevent any UTIs, since she has a chronic foley. I would also like to discuss her diet since she is eating majority take out. This contains a lot of carbs, sodium, and fats. Which with her medical history could make it a lot worse.
- ▶ Discuss the ethical issues this case presents.
An ethical issue this case presents is autonomy. The patient has to be able to make the decision of whether or not it would be best for her to stay at home or go to a skilled facility. Her POA might have other wishes for her, but as long as she is competent, she has the right to make her own decisions.
- ▶ Discuss the legal issues this case presents.
A legal issue presented in this case is that negligence could occur. Since she has a home health aide, it could be seen that the aide may be negligent if she saw the patient in such a state and did not notify anyone.
- ▶ In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret?
I would serve as an advocate for Margaret by explaining to her what is going on and that she has full autonomy to choose whatever option she feels will best suite her. I wouldn't try to pressure her into anything, just simply explain her options and how each one could benefit her.
- ▶ What other departments would you involve in her care, and why?

Case management to see if they would be able to talk to her about going to assisted living or a nursing home to potentially have a better quality of life than she is currently having at her apartment. I would also like to involve a dietician to see if she is willing to get some help with her diet. This could also drastically improve her quality of life, and could help with some of the fatigue.

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.