

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?
 - Infection (UTI)/ sepsis, fluid/ electrolyte status, DVTs, pressure injuries/skin integrity, blood sugar status, renal function, nutrition, HTN/ hypotension, and atelectasis (cough/deep breathe).
- ▶ 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 like to discuss with her poa on locating medication dosages and encourage them to go with the patient to the next primary care appointment. Ask about living situations, how often someone is available to check in on the patient at home. Home health being available for bathing once a week is helpful, however there's so many other needs she seems to need help with. Is her home accessible? Severity of the current and chronic illnesses present, management of the conditions and the patients' wishes and values.
- ▶ Discuss the ethical issues this case presents.
 - Ensuring Margeret is able to make decisions while understanding the risks of treatment/ not treating the conditions. Returning her to an environment without proper assistance. A poa that is not going to her healthcare appointments and or stopping in to check on her at home, to ensure she's getting the assistance she needs.
- ▶ Discuss the legal issues this case presents.
 - Limited access to care and home safety. Verify poa / ensure documentation is valid and follow informed consent from the patient. Document accurately. Be a mandatory reporter for possible neglect from the patient's poa, ensure the patient is allowing home health to help her the one day a week with her bathing and is not refusing care. Ensure discharge planning is safe.
- ▶ In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret?
 - Monitoring her condition and responding early, ensuring her discharge plans are safe and appropriate, support decisions and properly educate her on her condition. I would also consult case management/ social work to ensure she has proper resources, home health, and possibly placement for her discharge. I would also ensure the patient is supported and her dignity is maintained throughout her care as a woman with dwarfism.
- ▶ What other departments would you involve in her care, and why?

- Internal medicine, cardiology, PT/OT, dietician, cardiology, and urology. To monitor her current conditions and provide proper education on her needs for the future, such as living arrangements, diet, and management of conditions. I would also include case management/ social work to review social determinants of health and ensure the patient is given resources as needed depending on willingness to accept or desire assistance.

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.