

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? There are many overall concerns that I have for this patient. The first being her risk for serious complications that could come from her current condition. Specific complications that I would be concerned about due to the symptoms that patient is presenting would be DKA and sepsis. In addition, I would be concerned with her diet, activity level and lack of support system.

▶ 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 communicate with her and her POA with a lot of compassion and empathy. It seems that the patient is going through an extremely rough time and has been for a while. This would cause the patient to possibly have some mental health issues. I would discuss depression and anxiety with this patient specifically. In addition, this patient requires education as to her living situation, diet and activity level. This education would be done at an appropriate time, but would need to be stressed significantly.

▶ Discuss the ethical issues this case presents.

One ethical issue that could come from this case would be the lack of family and support system for the patient. Another would be lack of communication between the patient and the medical staff. It has already begun with not knowing the dosages of the medications that the patient is taking. In addition, moral distress could be an issue because the patient may know they need more help or to change their lifestyle, but feel powerless to do so.

▶ Discuss the legal issues this case presents.

One legal issue that this case could present is negligence and professional negligence. The patient is neglecting themselves from the proper diet and activity level. Someone from the medical staff could be negligent to the patient because they feel as if she hasn't helped herself so why would they help her.

▶ In what ways will you serve as an advocate for Margaret?

I would serve as an advocate for Margaret by educating her to the best of her ability, making recommendations that are reasonable for her when it comes to her living situation, and advocating for her to get the best care possible.

▶ What other departments would you involve in her care, and why?

Firstly, I would involve lab in her care. This would be to run blood work to start the process of diagnosing what the cause of her fever and weakness are.

Secondly, I would involve dietary and a dietician. This would be to specialize her diet while in the hospital and educate her on what her diet should look like at home. Finally, I would involve the social worker in her case. This would be a good resource to make a personalized plan for when she leaves the hospital that meets her needs and is safe for her to return to.

Place your answers to these questions in the “**Unit 1: Overview CC dropdown**” 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.