

### **Background Information:**

- ▶ 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 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.

### **Questions:**

- ▶ As the critical care nurse caring for her what overall initial concerns do you have?

As the critical care nurse after receiving this report, I am concerned with:

- Not having her medication/knowing the dosages
- Eating take-out for all meals
- Not leaving her house expect for doctor appointments
- No family for support system
- Requires assistance for all ADLs
- Lives alone
- Only one person on her contact list
- Has not been out of bed for several days d/t fatigue and weakness
- Having a history of HTN when her meals probably contain a lot of sodium

- ▶ 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 provide Margaret and her POA with a lot of information using a variety of resources. I would verbal explain each nursing procedure before I complete it. This way they both know what to expect. If she needs further education on her insulin, for example, I can use the teach back method to ensure she knows how to check her blood sugar and administer the proper amount of insulin. I would tell Margaret that it is a good idea to write down on a piece of paper her medications along with the doses, so that she has something to give the healthcare team. Videos and written documents may also be very helpful on her condition.

- ▶ Discuss the ethical issues this case presents.

Ethical dilemmas can pop up all the time between healthcare workers and family members, especially when family members do not have any medical background. From what I have seen while working in a hospital the past few years, family and friends tend to pick the medical options that are the most invasive. They believe that is going to be the best option, and give their loved one a longer life. However, with a longer life, they may be sacrificing quality of life. Margaret's friend, may want to give her quantity not quality.

- ▶ Discuss the legal issues this case presents.

Some legal issues that may come up while caring for Margaret is medication. She does not have her medication with her, and she does not know what dose she is currently taking. This is an issue because she may be sick due to needing a medication dose adjustment. However, if they initial dose is unknown, it is hard to tell if that is the cause for her fatigue and lack of energy. Medication administration is a high risk category for legal issues being Negligence and Malpractice.

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

Overall, I think that Margaret has some knowledge deficits when it come to her healthcare. I would serve as an advocate for her by give her all the resources she needs in order to make a full informed decision about her health. Once she decides on what course of action she would like to take, I would inform her POA along with the other staff members. This way, everyone can be on the same page as Margaret and her wishes.

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

I would include a dietitian. This would allow Margaret to have a healthcare worker who specializes in nutrition and dietary needs teach her the importance of a balanced diet. It seems like Margaret does not know how eating take-out food, such is probably high in sodium, may be hurting her health.

An occupational therapist would also be a vital member to include in her care. This is because the OT can teach Margaret different ways to complete ADLs, such as bathing and dressing more independently, and even meal preparation. They can also work on energy conservation and work simplification in order to conserve energy and prevent excessive fatigue.

A physical therapist would be beneficial in order to improve her functional strength and endurance required for ambulation and transfers. This will help her overall safety, both in her home and out in the community at her doctor appointments.

**Place your completed assignment in the drop box titled- "Unit 1: Overview CC" by 1/9/19 at 0800 & bring a copy with you to class on 1/9/19.**