

Reflective Case Study Gerontology Assignment:

ATI: Nurse's Touch 2.0: The Communicator 2.0 Video Interaction: Client Comfort and End of Life Care

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What was learned from this scenario?

This assignment allowed the student to see the benefits of therapeutic communication techniques while interacting with patients and health care team members. Therapeutic techniques permitted the nurse to guide the conversation to previously discussed topics, which helped the patient and her family voice their concerns and desires. Therapeutic techniques also helped the nurse assertively communicate her concerns about the patient to other team members and find a solution.

Identify the biggest takeaways.

a) Explain the factors that influenced this decision.

The end of life is difficult for the patient and their family, which may cause disagreements about care. Nurses must work with the healthcare team and family to honor patients' wishes. For example, in this scenario, one daughter called the nurse for pain medication, but the other said her mother did not want it. The nurse reminded the daughter requesting medication that it was her mother's decision and brought in the physician and nurse manager to help address the issue.

What are some of the main problems or key issues expressed in the scenario?

The student identified two main problems in the scenario. First, the patient's family focused on their needs instead of hers. Second, the patient's family caused her additional stress by constantly fighting with each other. For example, the patient's sister wanted a Chaplin to visit,

which caused a disagreement between the family because the patient stopped attending church years ago. Another example was when the patient asked the nurse to discuss hospice with her daughters. One daughter disregarded the mother's request because she was in denial about her mother's condition, which caused an argument between the sisters. These arguments affected the patient. She was visibly uncomfortable and voiced being tired throughout the scenario.

What were some of the challenging decisions the nurse needed to make?

a) Describe the rationale behind these decisions.

The nurse had to make a tough decision when the patient said she could not rest while her grandchildren were arguing. The nurse had to find a way to provide a peaceful environment for the patient. The nurse informed the patient's daughter that her mother needed rest periods throughout the day, which resulted in the children leaving the room. The nurse faced another challenging decision when the patient verbalized pain. One daughter expressed that the patient did not want pain medication because she feared missing out on visiting or not waking up. The other daughter called the nurse for medication. The nurse had to advocate for what her patient wanted. She informed the daughters that taking pain medication was their mother's choice and that they needed to consult her.

What factors influenced the nursing decisions and responses during the scenario?

a) Explain the response.

b) How will a nurse respond if this scenario presents again in the future?

The student chose answers based on what was best for the patient and her knowledge of therapeutic communication obtained while completing the interview with an older adult assignment. For example, when the patient's daughters disagreed about hospice care for their mother, the student responded with, "Let's talk about your differences of opinion." This response encouraged the daughters to continue sharing their thoughts on the matter. When the nurse

noticed that the patient was uncomfortable and expressed that she was tired when the room was chaotic, the student verified the patient's statement by stating, "You are having difficulty resting because of the noise?" The student chose the response "Your mother needs rest periods throughout the day" to fulfill the patient's request for a quiet environment. When the nurse asked the physician for his help, the student responded with the most direct but polite response: "I feel that the family could use some reinforcement of the things you have already taught them." The student will take the knowledge she learned from this scenario, such as advocating for her patients and using therapeutic communication techniques during similar encounters in the future.

Have similar situations been experienced in current clinical rotations?

- a) **How did nursing or others respond to the situation? Please explain.**
- b) **Describe successful communication strategies used or experienced in the clinical setting.**

This student followed a nurse caring for a patient at the end of life. The patient was unresponsive, and his family was at the bedside. The nurse discussed with them keeping him pain-free and comfortable. The nurse used clarifying statements to encourage them to express their concerns and actively listened while they voiced them. He received around-the-clock pain medication and oxygen. The staff bathed him, changed his bedding as needed, and repositioned him every two hours. The nurse remained nearby to support the family and checked in on them often. The family requested a visit from the Chaplain, which the nurse arranged. The nurse caring for this patient did an excellent job communicating with his family and caring for him.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having families discuss treatment options, including end-of-life decisions before a loved one becomes ill or early in a terminal illness.

Discussing treatment and end-of-life decisions early during a terminal illness is hard and uncomfortable for the patient and their family because they must acknowledge that death is approaching. However, it must occur to avoid situations like the one presented in this scenario.

Had this family discussed their mother's wishes and condition early on, they could have united to support her wishes and comfort her. Instead, they spent vital time arguing, which affected their mother, who was already suffering.