

N431 Adult Health II

Clinical Reflection Form

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Date: 10/7/2024

Clinical Rotation Site: Critical Care Unit

1. Briefly write about today's experience(s)

In today's clinical experience, I had the opportunity to administer medications and perform an assessment on a patient who threw up coffee ground emesis and displayed confusion after a stroke. I was responsible for changing out medications, priming the tubing for propofol, and administering bowel treatment, fentanyl, and versed.

Additionally, I assisted in transporting the patient to CT and collecting both urine and blood cultures, providing a hands-on learning experience.

2. What is one thing you learned?

I learned that after administering TNK (tenecteplase), the protocol for neuro assessments is highly structured to closely monitor for changes in the patient's neurological status. The protocol requires neuro checks every 15 minutes for the first two hours, followed by every 30 minutes for the next six hours, and then every hour for the remaining 16 hours. This consistent monitoring is crucial to detect any signs of complications, such as intracranial bleeding or worsening of stroke symptoms.

Additionally, I learned that during organ transplantation, a kidney can survive outside the body for up to three days, which allows for careful matching of donor organs to recipients. Interestingly, when a kidney is transplanted, the damaged kidney is often left

in the body rather than removed. The transplant process also has strict timelines; once a donor organ becomes available, the first recipient has one hour to respond, and if they do not, the next person on the list has only 30 minutes to decide. Timing is critical in organ harvesting as well—livers must be harvested within 30 minutes, while kidneys take around 90 minutes to remove. This knowledge gave me a greater appreciation for the precision and urgency involved in organ transplantation and post-stroke care.

3. What is one thing you would do differently?

If I could do something differently, I would focus more on engaging with the patient's family. Often, family members are anxious or overwhelmed, especially in critical care situations where their loved ones are facing serious health challenges. By taking the time to actively listen to their concerns and provide clear, compassionate explanations, I could help alleviate some of their stress and create a stronger sense of trust between the healthcare team and the family. Simple gestures like keeping them updated on the patient's condition or explaining the purpose of treatments could offer them reassurance. Ultimately, this approach would not only support the family emotionally but also enhance their understanding of the care being provided, making them feel more involved in the process.

4. What is your major "take home" from today's clinical experience(s)?

My major takeaway from today is the importance of balancing technical skills with compassion. In critical care, it's essential to be organized and efficient when managing medications, performing procedures, and responding to rapidly changing

situations. However, these technical skills alone are not enough to provide holistic care. Offering emotional support to both the patient and their family is equally crucial, as they often experience anxiety, fear, and confusion in these high-stress environments. Maintaining clear, empathetic communication can help build trust, alleviate fears, and ensure that the patient and their loved ones feel cared for beyond just the medical interventions. Compassion bridges the gap between clinical excellence and patient-centered care, which ultimately leads to better outcomes for everyone involved.

5. Is there anything else you would like to mention?

Overall, today reinforced the value of adaptability in a fast-paced environment like critical care. It's crucial to stay calm, focused, and flexible, especially when unexpected complications arise, such as the patient's emesis and confusion after a stroke. Being able to quickly assess changes in a patient's condition and respond appropriately is vital for patient safety, and this requires not only clinical knowledge but also the ability to think on your feet. Additionally, balancing multiple tasks, such as administering medications, coordinating transport for diagnostic tests, and collecting cultures, all while maintaining clear communication, highlighted the need for efficient time management. I also found the detailed information about organ transplants particularly interesting and useful for future clinical practice, as it gave me a deeper understanding of the urgency and precision required in these life-saving procedures. This experience underscored the importance of staying adaptable and continuously learning to provide the best possible care.