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Journal 5

February 25, 2023

During this week of clinical I was assigned to NICU, the baby was 35 weeks and 5 days born via vaginal delivery on 2/19/23. The baby weighed 5lb 7oz, head circumference of 31cm, and length of 48cm, APGAR was 9/9. The newborn received hep b, erythromycin, and vitamin k. The newborn hearing screen was completed with a passing score. The baby was admitted to the NICU because the baby was having issues feeding. The mother chose to formula feed and expressed the difficulties she was having.

After spending some time in the NICU, I got a chance to assess and observe the techniques the nurses used to care for the baby. When a child is born preterm, they are automatically at a disadvantage. Their brains and organs are often not fully developed which can cause issues that a full-term baby might not face. In this case, the baby had trouble sucking and swallowing. The nurse made a comment stating some premature babies lack the interest to feed and this is what they were experiencing with this baby.

In the NICU the nurse demonstrated how they use a slow-feed nipple which is designed for premature babies who have a slower feeding preference. It is important to ensure the baby is fed every 3 hours and upright during feedings to prevent aspiration. The rooting reflex was also performed frequently to stimulate interest and successful feedings. Quality newborn feedings are essential and should be accomplished before the baby is discharged. If the baby has long-term feeding issues, we have to consider potential risks relating to hypoglycemia and jaundice.

Because the NICU had only one baby, I was also assigned to take vitals and make beds for the patients on the unit. The greatest challenge this week was getting vitals for the patients to present to the nurse in a timely fashion. The unit did not have a tech this day and all the nurses' wanted vitals relatively at the same time. While I did get through it, this just demonstrated how important prioritizing and time management are in nursing.

The greatest accomplishment of the week was bed making and ensuring the patient's basic needs were met. When I was assigned this task, I laughed and thought to myself, my clinical instructor must know the areas I feel I need improvement on. I have made beds before but never for multiple patients in a row. I appreciated this because we often get caught up on performing assessments, giving medications, and documenting. It is important to remember nursing starts by having the patients' basic needs met. Making sure their beds are made, providing towels and toiletries and ensuring the patient is in a clean environment.

The nursing skills performed this week included using the vital sign machine, practicing time management, and using effective communication with patients. Good communication is not only important with patients, but it is also necessary to have clear communication with staff members and students to carry out effective nursing care. I can improve by working on time management and prioritizing patients based on who needs assistance first. I am sure I will get better in due time with experience.

The scripture reference this week is, "Humble yourselves, therefore under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxieties on him because he cares for you" (1Peter 5:7) This verse reminds me that God is always with me during good and bad times. I use to get anxious during clinical but now I am becoming more comfortable and I am looking forward to my future clinical experiences.