

Weekly Reflective Journal

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Friday, January 24th, 2014

What I did.

This week was a little more challenging than last; it was an opportunity to put my skills to the test and attempt to translate lab experience into real life situations. I found myself extremely overwhelmed when faced with attempting to a bed bath, almost to the point to tears. However, I didn't end up doing one, or act on any other nursing duties. The PSW I was paired with was on modified duties so I gained zero nursing opportunities that should have thus far. However, during meal times, interacting with the residents was a great experience because I was able to get a feel for their personalities and the standard routine they were accustomed to.

What I learned about myself.

I found that when faced with a challenge, I was not nearly as confident in my abilities as I expected I would be at this point. However, I found that I handled communication with the residents very well, as they seemed to be very welcoming towards me and opening up to me on a personal level.

What would I do differently?

Next time, I will do my best to take on more challenging opportunities as I need to gain hands on experience to better my skills as a nurse. I would also attempt to ask more questions when I am unsure without fear of belittlement by those more qualified than myself. I also shall try to remain calm when faced with something I may find difficult at first and try to take a more confident approach.

What I learned about nursing.

Talking to one of the staff members who has experienced many different fields, I learned that there is a lot more to long term care than I would have

expected. You need to be extremely qualified and engage in life long learning as it requires you to have an array of skills. I realized that nursing truly is a life long commitment to provide the most competent care that a patient or resident deserves.

How does this relate to coursework?

I found when faced with the clinical setting, skills learned in labs did not exactly translate. I found that beds were not being raised to a safe working level and lift and transfer techniques were not being utilized in the same manner. This showed me that I must be willing to adapt to new interpretations and abide by the facility's way of doing things. However, I did find the communication tools very helpful when communicating with the residents as I saw their eyes light up when I referred to them as a "young lady" or asked about their family.

Final Reflective Journal

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Over the course of my clinical experience, the most important thing I learned is that time management is an essential aspect of the nursing profession. While at placement, I was able to witness all of the tasks the PSW's, RPN's, and RN's are responsible for completing during a short amount of time. They remained very organized and on top of their duties, which I seemed to struggle with; but with some help of the RN, I gained the skills and knowledge of how to focus and prioritize my daily activities. It is important because a nurse's work is critical as their patient's lives may be on the line and there is no room for major errors.'

My best experience during clinical was when the RN would continue to take me under her wing and take me out of my comfort zone. For example, she told pulled me aside and said, "I want you to take my blood pressure right now." Of course this is not a skill I am very comfortable with but she was there to challenge me while teaching me required skills with real world application experiences. She provided an environment for me that I felt comfortable asking questions and gained applicable knowledge I will need for my future career.

The most difficult experience for me was breaking outside of my comfort zone. Being the youngest within my group, I felt extremely intimidated because the majority or other students have prior degrees and a vast amount of knowledge about the medical world that I have never touched. Having very limited medical knowledge, I felt very scared going into placement and performing tasks I have only read about. Hopefully, over time, I will gain the confidence in myself to provide safe and competent care to my future patients.

In terms of nursing practice, I have developed strengths in certain areas compared to others. Those strengths would include: my development of assessment skills, my ability to develop strong, therapeutic relationships, and I have gained a basis of understanding with the norms of an older adult population. However, there is definitely room for improvement; my top two goals for improvement are to develop confidence in my abilities and gain knowledge about different medications and understand their rationale of use.