

Point of care - Scenario 1 (Clinical teaching of a procedure at the bedside)

Karen is the Clinical Nurse Educator of a high dependency unit. She has been involved in educating Rob, a new member of staff, and helping him make the transition back into the workplace. Rob has previous experience working in high dependency, but has spent the last four years away from nursing.

During a morning shift, Rob is required to change the central line dressings on a number of his patients. He approaches Jo, a senior Registered Nurse, and asks if she will provide some clinical teaching. Jo agrees, but tells Rob "it will have to be quick, I'm very busy." She instructs Rob to wait at the bedside while she assembles the equipment. She returns and begins washing her hands and setting up the dressing trolley, ignoring both Rob and the patient. She begins the procedure with no word of explanation to the patient. The curtains are open and the patient's chest is partially exposed to access the central line site. The patient looks confused and upset. Jo speaks directly to Rob, ignoring the patient. "Now watch, I'll show you how to do this once, and the rest you should be able to do on your own." She carries out the procedure, occasionally describing her actions, but mostly using medical terminology that the patient cannot understand. Rob attempts to ask questions, but receives only brief responses. He gets the sense that Jo does not appreciate being interrupted. When Jo is finished, she looks to Rob and asks "Are we 'all good' now? If you have any problems, talk to one of the other girls, I'm really busy." She walks away, leaving Rob and the patient looking slightly bewildered.

Karen is passing by the bedspace soon after, and finds Rob looking anxious. She observes that Rob is preparing a trolley for a procedure. She asks Rob if he would like any help. Rob explains the situation. In the interests of patient safety, it is unit policy for new staff to complete a learning package and formal assessment prior to being able to perform central line dressings unsupervised. Karen decides to use this opportunity to review the learning package and practice some on the spot clinical teaching at the bedside with Rob.

Karen asks Rob if he has performed central line dressings in the past, and if so, how it was done. Rob states that he has, but that it was "a long time ago." He is keen to refresh his knowledge and receive some education about the procedure and rationale. Rob states that he has recently reviewed the literature in the learning package related to central line dressings in order to familiarise himself with the unit's practice.

Rob's learning goal is to be able to safely demonstrate correct procedure for changing a central line dressing. Karen discusses her expectations for the morning's clinical teaching and outlines the plan of action. Karen will allow Rob to observe as she performs a central line dressing, providing him with a rationale for each step. She encourages Rob to ask questions throughout the procedure. She will then supervise as Rob performs a dressing change, provided she feels he has understood the clinical teaching and is safe to carry out the task. Karen will assess Rob using the assessment tool in the learning package. The results of the assessment will be documented and conveyed to the Nursing Unit Manager (NUM). Guided questioning will be used throughout the process, to assess Rob's understanding and critical thinking skills. Karen will give feedback on Rob's performance as he carries out the task, and at the conclusion of the learning session.

Karen supervises as Rob assembles the necessary equipment. They approach the bedside of Mrs M. Karen introduces herself and obtains her consent for the procedure and for the clinical teaching. Karen's priority is to ensure that patient safety, comfort, dignity and

privacy are maintained throughout the procedure/teaching. She assures Mrs M that all aspects of her care will remain confidential.

Karen washes her hands and performs the dressing change on Mrs M, ensuring all communication involved in the process is explained so that the patient understands. Rob listens and asks questions to clarify information and expand his current knowledge.

Karen then asks Rob to discuss the steps of the task, providing a rationale at various stages of the process. Karen uses guided questioning to encourage independent thinking and problem solving. For example, 'What approach are you taking here and why? What are the possible complications? How would you recognise/prevent/respond to these situations? How would you approach this next time?'

Karen is satisfied with Rob's knowledge and critical thinking/problem solving skills. They move on to the second patient. Rob is about to begin the procedure when Karen interrupts. She reminds Rob to introduce himself to the patient, explain the procedure and obtain consent before beginning the task. She identifies that Rob has forgotten to position the patient correctly prior to donning his sterile gloves, and encourages him to take time before commencing the task to ensure that all the necessary preparation has been carried out. Rob changes the dressing following the correct procedure and is able to describe each step as he approaches it, allowing Karen to ensure that he is acting safely.

At the end of the procedure, they thank the patient and move away from the bedside to discuss Rob's performance in more detail. Karen commends him on his success, giving examples of aspects of the task that he performed well. "You did a really good job Rob. Your hand washing and aseptic technique are correct. You understood the steps of the procedure and performed them correctly. You described to me the complications that can occur and demonstrated good critical thinking when asked how you would respond to these situations. It is great that you asked lots of questions. It shows me that you are able to recognise the limitations of your practice and can identify when to ask for help. The two areas that you need to work on are preparation and communication. It's important to communicate with the patient and prepare your workspace before you begin the task. Take a moment to plan what you are about to do and run through the process we have just completed in your head before you start, to check that you have covered everything and can move ahead confidently."

Karen asks if Rob has any questions. She provides Rob with a copy of the completed assessment form and refers him to online learning material and unit policies he can access for further reading.