**Reflective Journal: Changing a Patient for the First Time**

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NURS 1512: Clinical Practicum 1

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**Student statement:** By submitting this reflection, I am acknowledging that it is my own work. Comments are my own and have not been used in any previous work (inside or outside the institution). I have followed the rules outlined by my instructor and am compliant with the University of Windsor, St. Clair College, and/or Lambton College Academic Integrity Policy.

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| **Category** | **Student Reflection (must be typed)** | | |
| **Look Back**  **(L)** | A relevant experience I encountered this week was changing a patient for the first time. This was significant because my peers and I completed this task independently without guidance from any of the nurses or instructors. After practicing in the lab many times, it can sometimes be challenging to translate that into a clinical setting. Before walking into the patient's room for the first time, I felt extremely nervous and stressed. A million thoughts were racing in my head as I was about to do something I had never done before. It was my first time working with a patient, and I felt that I took over as a leader and successfully cared for the patient. Once my peers and I gathered all the equipment needed and introduced ourselves, we began by turning her to her side and taking off the dirty brief. We wiped her and changed her. Before we left, I asked her if she was comfortable and needed anything. This was a beneficial experience because I felt confident in my abilities and capable of caring for this patient. This was significant to my growth as a student nurse, as I now believe I can perform this task on my own and will be confident enough to do so next clinical week. | | |
| **Examine Experience**  **(E)** | Providing care for a patient for the first time, even something as simple as a brief change can be extremely stressful as a student nurse. Rafati et al. (2017) conducted a study on seven undergraduate nursing students who had no previous experience in the hospital. After interviewing these students after their first day, the main finding was that they had little confidence in whether they provided proper care for their patients. They felt that they were inadequate in their skills and knowledge and feared the potential of harming them (Rafati et al., 2017). The research findings show the students' lack of belief in themselves when caring for a patient. However, I think it is essential to be confident in the skills you know how to perform and within your range of knowledge. The most nerve-racking part for me is not knowing what to do if something does go wrong. I think as new nurses, we are so scared because we do not want to harm the patient. The most important thing I took from this article is that we all feel nervous when walking into the patients room for the first time. When providing the care we know how to do, like a brief change, we must have faith in ourselves to help our patients. By being confident, I was able to change my patient successfully. | | |
| **Appraise**  **and**  **Analyse**  **(A)** | When talking to my peers in my clinical group, they also felt the same way. Most of them agreed that they were not very confident in their own skills and abilities before the first day. After working with the patient, everyone said that they feel a lot better and are more confident in performing the skills we have learned in the first semester. I also talked to my parents about my clinical experience. They saw how stressed I was the night before about going into the hospital, and they continuously told me that I would be fine and that I know what I am doing. When I came home, I explained that once I got in the patient's room, all of my stress sort of went away and I was able to take care of them. They told me that they knew I would do fine and just needed to believe in myself more than I do. My mom, also a nurse, said that she still gets nervous doing things even after being a nurse for so long. What is important is that she does all the research and preparation needed to perform the tasks she needs so she can feel more confident. | | |
| **Research**  **and**  **Revision**  **(R)** | From this clinical experience, I learned that I am more capable of doing the skills I have learned in the lab than I thought. Before my second day of clinical, I was worried that I wouldn't properly care for my patient. After clinical, I learned that I am capable and just need to believe in myself a little more. The article also showed how nursing students are always not confident in their skills at first. For next weeks clinical experience, I want not to doubt my own decisions and do what I was taught confidently. And if I do run into any issues, not be shy to ask for help or clarification. | | |
| **New Perspective**  **(N)** | For future practice as a nurse, this new knowledge will help with providing overall better care. Being confident will help in other aspects like stronger leadership skills in the clinical setting and being more eager to help other nurses on the floor. If I walk into the room believing that I can do the things I was taught that will translate and allow me to perform that task. My Canadian Fundamentals of Nursing textbook will be a great tool to help me gain confidence in my skills. This book explains in-depth all the skills I will be performing. It includes taking a bed bath, changing a patient, and taking vitals. If there is anything I lack confidence in, I can always refer back to this to get more comfortable. | | |
| **Concept Identification** | This experience relates to knowledge-based practice. Changing a patient was taught in the lab and was reinforced by our instructors many times. This skill is a part of my scope of practice, and I was able to apply this knowledge to the clinical setting. By using this concept, I successfully changed a patient with my peers without assistance from the other nurses. | | |
| **References and APA Format** | **Student Reference(s) in APA Format:** | | |
| **Grade:** | **□ Satisfactory □ Excellent** | **□ Unsatisfactory** |  | |
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**References**

Rafati, F., Nouhi, E., Sabzehvari, S., & Dehghan-Nayyeri, N. (2017). Iranian nursing students’ experience of stressors in their first clinical experience. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 33*(3), 250-257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2016.09.003>