



PROFESSIONAL ISSUE

Caring for “Difficult” Patients & Families

- 68 y.o Female
- Bilateral lower extremity cellulitis & left hip pain
- Admitted September 21st
- 455 Lbs.
- Hospital bed, previously broke
- non-compliant with outpatient therapies & treatment from home
- No help with care

Situation

- Uses bedpan hourly
- 4 people → pull in bed, get on bedpan
- C/O not getting comfortable in bed
- Pt. complains of being left on bedpan w/o call light
- Uncooperative, verbally abusive, rude
- Pt. calls son & hotline to complain



Action

- Transfer → bariatric bed with trapeze
- Confronted about why she called son & lied
- Reminded her call light was on chest the whole time
 - ▣ Call light was “on” when we returned to remove her off the bedpan



Outcome

- Son furious that client was transferred to bariatric bed
- Nursing supervisor spoke with the client & family
- Unit manager confronted us
 - ▣ Situation was explained, the end

Reflection



- Patient was rude, always complaining, verbally abusive, and very uncooperative
- Behavior occurred during different shifts with different nurses
- Hard to deal with these types of patients
- Must not discriminate → provide the best care possible (Khalil, 2009)

Reflection

- “Taking” this kind of behavior affects nurse physically & psychologically (Khalil, 2009)
- Important lesson is not to let it run the nurse over
- Nurses will always have “difficult patients”

Reflection

- “Despite the evidence of discriminatory practices, all registered nurses pledged to care for all persons who seek their help irrespective of color, gender, religion, age, or sex” (Khalil, 2009, p. 442)

Your Reflection

- Think back to your precepting experience...
- Name a situation in which you encountered a “difficult” patient/family
- How did you handle it & what did you feel?