

# Nursing Critical Thinking and Unprofessional Conduct

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## 1. Scenario

A Nurse Provides prescription medicine without authority

A Nurses Board received a complaint concerning allegations that a nurse (medication endorsed), whilst working in the emergency department of a hospital, practiced outside the scope by knowingly providing prescription-only medication to a patient without the authority of a medical officer.

When interviewed, the nurse stated the patient attended the emergency department for treatment, and the department was busy at that particular time. The patient, knowing this, stated that they were not prepared to wait for treatment. The nurse made inquiries about the patient's allergies and responses to medication and then consulted a doctor. The nurse then obtained a packet of antibiotics and provided them to the patient. The nurse also made false entries in the medical records of the patient. (Adapted from Nexus, NBV, November 2008, Volume 16 Issue 2).

Key points to elaborate (addressing performance criteria)

1.1

**Discuss and explain how the nurse failed to use critical thinking and analysis skills effectively in this situation, leading to unprofessional conduct. (150 words)**

Nursing is a profession where they have a natural ability to nurture. The instinct and desire to help others sometimes overcome the ability to critically analyze the situation. The main duties of a nurse are to analyze the situation, propose the best possible solution and then choose effective solutions. In the given scenario, the instinct to help others was dominant in the behavior of a nurse. In doing so, she failed to ask permission from any medical officer. This was beyond the scope of her duty. Then, giving medicines and misrepresentation of data on records of the hospital is a critical issue. She did not critically analyze how this can lead to severe consequences because manipulating hospital records is surely a serious issue. This failure to analyze the situation without critically thinking resulted in allegations against her where she was held responsible for the misconduct. This was because she tried to help the patient who could not wait for long but the method chosen by her was wrong.

1.2

**Reflect on the scenario and explain how the nurse failed to apply the foundations of contemporary nursing practice. (150 words)**

The contemporary nursing practice makes a nurse skilled enough to act within boundaries and fulfill her ethical, legal and professional responsibilities. In the given scenario, the nurse was unauthorized and still, she gave antibiotics to a patient that was beyond the scope of her job. However, this act cannot be justified by the statements that the emergency department was busy and the patient was not willing to wait for treatment. In addition, the false entries in the record of the patient determine that she has poor knowledge of her profession and she is incompetent to continue the practice. According to the nursing practice and standards, the nurse is only allowed to administer medicine with the orders from the doctor and have the instruction of the telephone when a doctor cannot write a prescription or there is an emergency. However, the management guidelines for medication state that drugs should only be administered by professional and authorized doctors.

1.3

**Analyze and state the relevant legislation and professional regulations related to this case (Quote examples of how the nurse failed to follow those legislations and regulations). (150 words)**

The professional regulations have a complete code for the delegation of authority. The main purpose of these standards is to protect and serve the public. According to the Quality Use of Medicine National Strategy (2002), the prescription of medicine should take place appropriately, effectively, and safely. There are regulations, including Guidelines for dispensing of medicine from the Medicine Board of Australia, that provide complete instructions about professional legislation to be followed by nurses while dispensing medicine (Guidelines for dispensing of medicines). The health regulations of 1996 state that the registered nurse is allowed to prescribe only some controlled drugs. In addition, the accountability for the actions conducted by the nurse is placed on her according to the National Competency Standards of ANMC. The nurse failed to follow this legislation because she did not take any writer or telephonic order from the doctor before giving out medicine. In addition, she misrepresented information that is against the code of conduct of a nurse.

1.4

**Propose three types of professional development you would recommend for this nurse to undertake to prevent future such incidents and why. (150 words)**

Nursing regulations are important, and because of limited experience at the start of a career, a nurse should go through professional development to advance in their career. In this case, under discussion, the nurse should assess her learning needs and then follow professional development cases that help in upholding her competence. She has problems upholding the practice and acting in an unsafe manner that results in incompetent behavior. There is also an ANMC code of ethics that should be followed for recording necessary information accurately. This case shows that the nurse had poor knowledge and prescribed unapproved medication. She needs to act carefully while keeping in mind the consequences. Having professional development is important because it will prevent any such scenario from arising again. These counseling techniques and educational programs will help in continuing the work properly. Also, if there is any change in the workplace, this will help her to work safely and competently.

1.5

**Explain and justify the seriousness of this issue in 150-200 words. Analyze and state how you can promote the reflective practice of self and others.**

A nurse has some ethical, legal, and professional responsibilities that she needs to follow. To comply with the duties, a nurse should have a satisfactory level of knowledge. This is a serious issue because a nurse has to take responsibility for her actions and misrepresenting information in hospital records along with prescribing without the consent of any authorized doctor are unavoidable issues. Indulging in any kind of activity where the prescription takes place without the consent of a doctor can result in causing harm to the patient. In serious cases, this may also lead to the death of a patient, so this should be taken seriously. This act also results in the cancellation of her registration because it has social, monetary, and legal implications. The reflective practice of self and others should be improved by taking account of the acts done by a person. This should be done because this type of conduct raises questions about the professionalism and faith of health care. This is the profession of lifesavers, so all the actions should be carried out carefully.

## References

(n.d.). *Guidelines for dispensing of medicines*. Pharmacy Board of Australia.