

# LaFleur Brooks' Health Unit Coordinating

7<sup>th</sup> edition

Chapter 06

Workplace Behavior

# Lesson 6.1

## Values and Ethics and Patient Confidentiality

1. Define the terms in the vocabulary list.
2. Write the meaning of the abbreviations in the abbreviations list.
3. List seven factors that may influence a worker's behavior.
4. Define personal values and explain how personal values could affect one's interactions in the health care setting.

# Lesson 6.1

## Values and Ethics and Patient Confidentiality (cont'd)

5. List six behavioral traits that make up one's work ethic.
6. Explain the purposes of the Privacy Rule and the Security Rule contained in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
7. List seven patient rights as outlined in HIPAA.
8. Identify seven patient identifiers (individually identifiable health information [IIHI]).

# Lesson 6.1

## Values and Ethics and Patient Confidentiality (cont'd)

9. Explain two purposes of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act.
10. Explain two main responsibilities the health unit coordinator (HUC) has for HIPAA compliance.
11. Discuss how the HUC can protect patient confidentiality, including with regard to electronic and paper medical records.

# Workplace Behavior

- A pattern of actions and interactions of an individual that directly or indirectly affects their effectiveness while at work
- Reflects the attitude and amount of enthusiasm the employee brings to the job
- Today's health care employees must perform their jobs efficiently and effectively while showing patients respect, patience, and empathy.

# Factors that Influence a Worker's Behavior

- Philosophy and standards of the organization
- Leadership style of supervisors
- Meaningfulness or importance of the work
- How challenging the work is
- Relationship with co-workers
- One's personal characteristics, such as abilities, interests, aptitudes, values, and expectations
- External factors, such as the person's family life, health, recreational habits, etc.

# Personal Values

- The beliefs or culture of an individual that evolve from circumstances with the external world
- Can change over time
- *Morris Massey*: values are formed during:
  - Imprint period – birth to 7 years of age
  - Modeling period – 8 -14 years
  - Socialization period – 15 -21 years

# Values Clarification

- An important tool for health unit coordinators to use in preparing to become competent professionals
- Either consciously or unconsciously, values guide personal and professional thinking.
- Essential for HUCs to:
  - Understand and be aware of their values
  - Remain nonjudgmental of the values others hold that differ from their own.
- Value conflicts include cultural, spiritual, social, and ethnic differences.



# Behavior Traits that Make Up One's Workplace Ethics

- Dependability
- Accountability
- Consideration
- Cheerfulness
- Empathy
- Trustworthiness
- Respectfulness
- Courtesy
- Tactfulness
- Conscientiousness
- Honesty
- Cooperation
- Attitude

# Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996

- Five sections
- Health providers and health plans are legally required to follow this act.
- Changes to original legislation made several times
  - ARRA in 2009 – expands HIPAA's privacy and security regulations

# 2003 Title II – Privacy Rule

- Establishes regulations for the use and disclosure of protected health information (PHI)
- Gives patients' rights over their health information, including:
  - The right to examine and obtain a copy of their health records
  - The right to request corrections

# 2003 Title II – Security Rule

- Applies to electronic protected health information (EPHI) or individually identifiable health information (IIHI) in electronic form
- IIHI relates to:
  - an individual's past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition
  - an individual's provision of health care
  - past, present, or future payments provided for provision of health care to an individual and that identifies the individual; or with respect to which there is a reasonable basis to believe the information can be used to identify the individual

# Patient Rights as Outlined in HIPAA

- 1) Right to receive Notice of Privacy Practices and notice of the uses and disclosures of protected health information (PHI) that may be made by the covered entity.
- 2) Right to request restrictions on use and disclosure of PHI—The health care provider is not required to agree to a restriction.
- 3) Right to receive confidential communication—The health care provider must accommodate reasonable requests from individuals to receive communications of PHI by alternative means or at alternative locations and cannot require a reason for the request.

## Patient Rights as Outlined in HIPAA, cont'd

- 4) Right to not be listed in hospital directory when admitted to hospital.
- 5) Right to access, inspect, and copy PHI—The health care provider can deny a request under certain conditions, and the requesting individual
- 6) Right to amend PHI—The health care provider can deny a request and must provide a timely denial in plain language and include the basis for the denial.
- 7) Right to receive an accounting of disclosures of PHI—required by law.

# HIPAA, IHI, and Patient Identifiers

- 1) Names
- 2) All geographical subdivisions smaller than a state, including street address, city, county, precinct, and ZIP code
- 3) All elements of dates (except year) for dates directly related to an individual, including birth date, admission date, discharge date, date of death; and all ages over 89 and all elements of dates (including year) indicative of such age, except that such ages and elements may be aggregated into a single category of age 90 or older

# HIPAA, IIHI, and Patient Identifiers, cont'd

- 4) Phone numbers
- 5) Fax numbers
- 6) Electronic mail addresses
- 7) Social Security numbers
- 8) Medical record numbers
- 9) Health plan beneficiary numbers
- 10) Account numbers
- 11) Certificate or license numbers
- 12) Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers,  
including license plate numbers



# HIPAA, IIHI, and Patient Identifiers, cont'd

- 13) Device identifiers and serial numbers
- 14) Web Universal Resource Locators (URLs)
- 15) Internet Protocol (IP) address numbers
- 16) Biometric identifiers, including fingerprints and voice prints
- 17) Full face photographic images and any comparable images
- 18) Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code (Note: This does not mean the unique code assigned by the investigator to code the data.)

# Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act 2009

- Provides over \$30 billion for health care infrastructure and the adoption and meaningful use of health information technology
- Widens the scope of privacy and security protections available under HIPAA
- Applies the same HIPAA privacy and security requirements (and penalties) for covered entities to business associates
- Increases the potential legal liability for noncompliance and provides for more enforcement

# HUC Responsibilities Regarding HIPAA Compliance

- Avoid verbally repeating confidential information.
- Manage the patient's electronic record in a manner that ensures confidentiality of its contents or to control the patient's paper chart.
- When admitted to the hospital, patients will be given a facility directory opt-out form to sign that indicates whether they wish to be listed in the hospital directory.

# Facility Directory Opt-Out Form

## FACILITY DIRECTORY OPT OUT FORM

I hereby request that my name, location, general condition, and religious affiliation **NOT BE INCLUDED** in the facility directory. By invoking this right, I understand that people inquiring by phone or in person will be told, "*I have no information about this patient.*" No deliveries, except U.S. Mail, will be forwarded to me (e.g., flowers).

I hereby request that my name, location, and general condition be released **ONLY** to those persons listed below. No deliveries, except U.S. Mail, will be forwarded to me (e.g., flowers). (Religious affiliation, if any, will only be provided to clergy.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby request that my name, location, and general condition be released to anyone **EXCEPT** those persons listed below. No deliveries, except U.S. Mail, will be forwarded to me (e.g., flowers). (Religious affiliation, if any, will only be provided to clergy.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby request that my name, location, general condition and religious affiliation **BE PLACED** in the facility directory.

PRINT PATIENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PATIENT SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WITNESS SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Form to be forwarded or faxed to Admitting Department.

File original in permanent medical record.

# Protecting Patient Confidentiality

- Do not discuss patient information (other than what is necessary to care for the patient).
- Conduct necessary conversations with other health care personnel outside of the hearing distance of patients and visitors.
- Do not discuss medical treatment with the patient or relatives.
- Do not discuss hospital incidents away from the nursing unit.

# Protecting Patient Confidentiality, cont'd

- Refer all telephone calls from reporters, police personnel, legal agencies, and other investigative sources to the nurse manager or public relations.

# Maintaining Confidentiality of the Patient's EMR

- Be aware of who is in the nursing station looking over their shoulder.
- Be aware of who could be eavesdropping on conversations.
- Follow the hospital policy for duplication of patient documents.
- *Ask outside agency personnel for picture identification.*

# Maintaining Confidentiality of the Patient's Paper Chart

- Follow the hospital policy for duplicating portions of the patient's chart.
- Control access to the patient's chart.
- Ask outside agency personnel for picture identification.
- Control transportation of the patient's chart.



## Lesson 6.2

### **Employment: Finding and Maintaining a Professional Career**

12. Explain the importance of professional appearance.
13. List three preclinical or preemployment screenings or requirements and four requirements of The Joint Commission.
14. Explain why a supervisor or clinical instructor would request a drug test for cause and what the consequences would be if a clinical student were to refuse the test or were to test positive for drug use.

## Lesson 6.2

### **Employment: Finding and Maintaining a Professional Career (cont'd)**

15. Discuss five guidelines for cell phone use and four rules of elevator etiquette to adhere to when in the hospital setting.
16. Explain where guidelines regarding attendance, punctuality, and breaks would be found and discuss the importance of employees and potential employees knowing and following those guidelines.
17. Discuss the first step to take when encountering sexual harassment.

## Lesson 6.2

### **Employment: Finding and Maintaining a Professional Career (cont'd)**

18. Describe five signs of impending violence and explain what action the HUC should take when recognizing signs of or an act of violence.
19. Discuss two purposes of an employee performance evaluation.
20. Discuss the benefits of collecting information and writing out a fact sheet for reference before completing a job application or writing a résumé.

# Lesson 6.2

## **Employment: Finding and Maintaining a Professional Career (cont'd)**

21. Discuss the purpose of a résumé and list 10 guidelines to follow and items to include when writing a résumé.
22. Explain how one would prepare for a phone interview and for an in-person interview.

# Professional Appearance

- Earns the trust, respect, and confidence of one's employer, co-workers, patients, and others.
- Demonstrates confidence and sends a message that one has self-respect and respects their position.
- Employees represent the facility for which they work; patients and visitors gain their first impressions of a facility through the appearance of its employees.

# Examples of Appropriate Dress



# Guidelines for Workplace Appearance

- Women:
  - Clothes should fit well; be clean and pressed.
  - Modest in length and style
  - Stockings worn with a skirt
  - Sculptured nails and nail polish not acceptable
  - Make-up modest in amount and color
  - Lightly applied perfume or not at all

# Guidelines for Workplace Appearance, cont'd

- Men:
  - Slacks and shirt or sweater should fit well; be clean and pressed.
  - Socks should be worn.
  - Aftershave and colognes lightly applied or not worn at all
- Women and Men:
  - Clean and appropriate shoes
  - Jewelry worn should be modest.
  - Tattoos may or may not be acceptable in your place of employment. Use good taste.
  - Clean and groomed hair



# Employment Issues

- Preclinical or Preemployment screenings
  - Drug Testing – more stringent for health care professionals
  - Fingerprinting and Background Check – be honest about convictions; they will be found.
  - Immunizations – MMR, TB skin or blood test, tetanus and diphtheria and hepatitis
  - Signed HIPAA Confidentiality Statement

# Joint Commission Requirements

- Certification in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) training
- Fire and safety in-service
- Infectious disease in-service
- HIPAA in-service (signed confidentiality statement)

# Drug Test for Cause

- A drug test may be requested by the supervisor or the instructor if:
  - A smell of alcohol (a drug) is detected on a student's/employee's breath.
  - Inappropriate behavior is observed.
- If the student or employee refuses the drug test or tests positive for drug use, s/he will be sent home and most likely will be terminated from the HUC program or employment.

# General Guidelines for Cell Phone Use

- Respect people in close proximity (speak softer, turn cell phone off when appropriate to do so, and pay attention to your surroundings).
- When in a public place, keep conversations brief.
- When out to dinner, spend time with who you are with, not with a phone.
- Follow rules for cell phone use in hospitals, schools, and airplanes, and while pumping gas
- Do not drive while using a cell phone.

# Elevator Etiquette

- When the elevator button light is lit, do not continue to push the button.
  - This may be causing the door to close on someone on another floor who is trying to enter or exit the elevator.
- When the elevator does arrive, stand aside and allow people to exit before you try to enter.

# Elevator Etiquette, cont'd

- When you are riding on an elevator and are going to a higher floor in the building, stand to the side or in the back, so others may exit on their floors.
- Patients who are being transported on stretchers and personnel who are pushing hospital equipment have priority for using elevators.

# Attendance, Punctuality, and Appropriate Breaks

- Guidelines regarding attendance, punctuality, and breaks are usually provided by the employer in an employment packet during orientation.
- It is essential that nursing unit personnel work as a team and that each member of the team is reliable and acts in a responsible, professional manner.

# Sexual Harassment

- Defined as unwanted and unwelcome behavior that is sexual in nature
  - Quid pro quo – making conditions of employment contingent on the victim's providing sexual favors
  - A hostile working environment is an environment that a reasonable person would find hostile and abusive.



# Sexual Harassment, cont'd

- What to do about sexual harassment:
  - Advise the person to stop, that you do not like or welcome this behavior.
  - Document the comments and behavior of the person.
  - File a complaint with the supervisor or with management

# Violence in the Workplace

- Signs of Impending Violence:
  - Verbally expressed anger and frustration
  - Body language, such as threatening gestures
  - Signs of drug or alcohol use
  - Presence of a weapon
  - The presence of someone who has a restraining order that prohibits them from being there

# Violence in the Workplace, cont'd

- When witnessing violence or the potential for violence:
  - Do not approach the threatening person.
  - Present a calm attitude.
  - Call security immediately.

# Agencies that Investigate Abuse

- All states have mandatory reporting laws for suspected child or elder abuse.
  - Some states have mandatory reporting laws for domestic abuse.
- Child Protective Services (CPS) – called to investigate suspected child abuse (SNAT, suspected non-accidental trauma)
- Adult Protective Services (APS) will be called in to investigate elder or domestic abuse.

# Employee Performance Evaluations

- Process should provide:
  - Positive feedback
  - Suggestions on how to improve in areas where improvement is needed
- Performance evaluations are placed in the employee's file.

# Completing a Job Application

- Prior to completing a job application:
  - Assemble information and make a fact sheet or have your résumé available so it can be used as a reference.
  - It is important to enter accurate information, including correct dates.
  - Have a list of work-related references (check with references to make sure they are comfortable with being called) with you in case you are asked to provide them.

# Job Application Guidelines

- Follow directions carefully.
- Be neat and be sure of dates and spelling.
- When there are gaps in employment, explain.
  - Example: “raising children,” “returned to school”
  - If you were doing anything for pay during this time, write “self-employed.”
- When stating a reason for leaving your last job, make it sound positive.
  - Example: “returned to school,” “decided on a career change”
- If you have little work experience, emphasize other strengths – list volunteer jobs.

# Job Application Guidelines, cont'd

- List the most recent work or educational experience first, not last.
- When asked the pay that you desire, do not identify a specific amount.
  - It is often best to write “open” or “negotiable.”
- If you did not graduate, write “attended” and list the institutions.
- Be honest.



# Social Networks

- Many employers check social networks to screen job candidates.
- When applying for a position, be mindful of what you post on social networks.
  - Use social networking constructively to minimize the potential for negative outcomes.

# Writing a Résumé

- Purpose of a résumé:
  - To get an interview – it is hoped that the interview will result in your getting a job.
- It is a marketing tool intended to create interest in one's abilities and potential.
- Read time for a résumé (time spent by human resources when deciding to or not to interview) is about 10 seconds.
- Résumés should be short, simple, and easy to read while gaining the reader's interest and revealing your value to the potential employer.

# Résumé Helpful Tips

- Before writing a résumé, take time to do a self-assessment on paper.
  - Outline skills and abilities, as well as work experiences and extracurricular activities.
  - This will make it easier for you to prepare a thorough résumé.
- A résumé may be dropped off, (dress appropriately in case there is an interview) faxed, or scanned and e-mailed.

# Guidelines for Creating a Résumé

- Use simple font.
- Use standard paper.
  - 8.5 × 11" white, ivory, or gray
- Keep a one-inch margin on all sides.
- Limit résumé to one page if possible.
- Single space within sections.
- Double space between sections.
- Bold, underline, or capitalize headings.
- Use everyday language and be specific.

# Guidelines for Creating a Résumé, cont'd

- A résumé should include:
  - Name, address, telephone, e-mail address, website address
  - Objective – be specific about the job wanted.
    - Example: “To obtain a HUC position within a health care facility to apply my organizational skills and medical knowledge”
  - Education (New graduates without a lot of work experience should list their educational information first.)
    - List most recent education first – add grade point average (GPA) if higher than 3.0.

# Guidelines for Creating a Résumé, cont'd

- Should also include:
  - List NAHUC (National Association of Health Unit Coordinators) certification, if applicable.
  - Work experience – briefly describe work experience, including specific duties performed.
    - List most recent work experience first.
    - Be accurate with dates of employment.
  - Other information – may include special skills or competencies, such as being bilingual or leadership experience in volunteer organizations
- "References furnished on request" – do not include reference information on résumé.

# Preparing for an Interview

- Take three breaths to relax before starting interview.
- Think positively about your skills and abilities.
- First impressions are lasting.
- Remember to speak clearly and with confidence.

# Guidelines for Successful Interviews

- In-person interviews:
  - Arrive on time (at least one-half hour early).
  - Stand until you are asked to sit down.
  - Make eye contact with interviewer.
  - Give a firm handshake.
  - Use body language to show interest – smile, nod, and give nonverbal feedback to the interviewer.



# Guidelines for Successful Interviews, cont'd

- Telephone interviews:
  - Be ready to answer phone or to call in.
  - If expecting a phone call from an employer, be sure that the answering message on your telephone is appropriate and understandable.
  - Stand during the telephone interview.

# Guidelines for Successful Interviews, cont'd

- Telephone interviews:
  - Choose a location and time so that there will be no distractions.
  - Relax and speak clearly and slowly – do not sound rushed or anxious.
    - The HUC position requires excellent telephone skills.

# Guidelines for Successful Interviews, cont'd

- In-person and telephone interviews:
  - Think in advance of work situations and how you would handle them.
  - Role play
    - Rehearse responses to difficult or uncomfortable issues that may come up.
  - Project a positive attitude and confidence.
  - Listen attentively to questions.
  - Keep answers brief and to the point.
  - Never criticize a former employer.

# Guidelines for Successful Interviews, cont'd

- In-person and telephone interviews:
  - Be aware of the job description for the position for which you are applying.
  - Ask questions – avoid yes or no answers – avoid long silences.
  - Ask about the next step in the process.
  - Thank the interviewer.
  - Write a thank you letter to anyone that you have spoken to.
  - Follow up.

# Lesson 6.3

## The Law

23. List seven ethical principles for patient care that the Code of Ethics for each health care profession and the Patients' Bill of Rights are based on.
24. List the three sources from which laws are derived.
25. Define medical malpractice and describe how "standard of care" is determined.
26. Identify six preventive measures that can be taken to minimize the risk of medical malpractice within the HUC practice.

# Healthcare Ethics

- Each health care profession has a code of ethics based on a set of principles that define the concepts of right or wrong for that profession.
- The National Association of Health Unit Coordinators (NAHUC) has an established code of ethics.

# Patient Care Partnership and Patients' Bill of Rights

- First patient bill of rights was approved by the American Hospital Association in 1972.
- Bill of rights is to make patient care more effective and give greater satisfaction to patient.
- The patient bill of rights has been modified several times.
  - Currently using the 1998 patient bill of rights as outlined in HIPAA

# Ethical Principles for Patient Care

- Respect – to hold in esteem or honor and to show a feeling of appreciation and regard
- Autonomy – an individual is free to choose and implement his own decisions.
- Veracity – requires both the health care professional and the patient to tell the truth.
- Beneficence – any action a health care professional takes should benefit the patient.
- Nonmaleficence – a health care professional will never inflict harm on the patient.



# Ethical Principles for Patient Care, cont'd

- Role Fidelity – health care is a team effort as no single individual can be solely responsible for providing all of a patient's health care needs.
- Confidentiality – a "Patient's Bill of Rights" outlines the individual's right to privacy in health care.

# Legal Concepts

- Law is derived from three sources:
  - Constitution – both federal and state constitutions
  - Statutes – written laws drawn up by the legislature
  - Common law – a case-by-case determination by a judge of what is fair under a given set of facts

# Standard of Care

- The standard of practice is established by expert witness testimony.
- A HUC expert is a person who is trained in the HUC profession and who testifies at trial as to what a reasonably prudent HUC would have done under the circumstances in question.
- Evidence of the standard of care may also be found in textbooks, standards from NAHUC, policy and procedure manuals, or standards of the Joint Commission.

# Medical Malpractice

- Defined as:
  - The professional negligence of a health care professional
  - The failure to meet a professional standard of care, resulting in harm to another
  - The failure to provide, for example, “good and accepted medical care”
- According to the National Academy of Science, approximately 98,000 Americans die from “medical mistakes” each year.

# Legal Documents

- A patient's EMR or chart contains permanent legal documents.
  - Medical Forms that are handwritten or printed from computer are legal documents and erasures are not allowed.
- HUC must treat all legal documents with special care and confidentiality.

# What the HUC Can Do to Avoid Legal Problems

- Know the HUC job description – do not engage in activities outside the job description.
- Keep current with the facility's policies and procedures.
- Keep current in the HUC practice.
- Do not assume anything.
- Do not perform nursing tasks, even as favors.
- Be aware of relationships with patients.