

Case Studies for Community Preceptors

Scenario #1

You are a school nurse who has agreed to precept an undergraduate nursing student from your regional university for the semester. She is a little more than halfway through her program and you have already spent a few days together. You see that your student, Lisa, is beginning to feel more comfortable in the school setting. The assignment you have given her today is to provide health information to Ben, a newly diagnosed 2nd grade student with asthma. She has reassured you that she has “studied up” on asthma and is prepared to teach.

As you sit in your office, you overhear her giving incorrect information to the student and sense that she is becoming frustrated with the child’s inattention (the teaching has been going on for a long time).

Using Adult Learning Principles, how would you proceed?

KEY:

Immediate response to situation:

- 1. Intervene by saying to the nursing student and child that you want to make sure that Ben has the information and proceed to model giving the correct information in an age-appropriate manner to the child. Then, end the teaching session and excuse the child.**
- 2. Ask the nursing student how she felt it went, i.e. what went well, what she feels she needs to work on.**
- 3. Reinforce her insights, if appropriate. Then present whatever positive aspects and areas for improvement that the student did not cover, or summarize the most important points she made.**
- 4. Ask about her previous experience with asthma and correct any misinformation. Help her to build on this experience. Specify what information she needs to research before proceeding to teach on asthma.**

Preparation for future teaching session:

- 5. Prior to other teaching sessions, request that the student give you the presentation or an outline.**
- 6. Have her review growth and development for the age group she will be working with.**
- 7. Have her verbalize an appropriate time limit for any teaching sessions in the future.**

Provide feedback to the clinical faculty.

Scenario #2

As an Occupational health nurse, you are interested in advancing the profession of nursing. In light of this, you have accepted an undergraduate nursing student to precept for the next few months. After your first few days with Chana, an international student, you assess her as competent but quite tentative. She is fairly quiet and reticent to forge ahead with new challenges.

Today you arranged for her to staff a Blood Pressure clinic within your factory and have made sure to ask those with previous high readings to attend during their break. You know the student is competent in using the cuff and knows how to interpret the readings. When you tell her about the clinic she becomes nervous and states she wants you to be right by her side the entire time. You know that your schedule today does not allow for you to be with her for the entire clinic.

Using Adult Learning Principles, what would you do and say now? How would you work with this student in the future?

KEY:

Immediate response to the situation.

- 1. Ask the student, "what are your concerns?"**
- 2. If she is unsure of her skills, reassure her that she is capable to accomplish this task and you see her as competent.**
- 3. Verify and validate with her that she has the knowledge and skills needed.**
- 4. If time permits, role play with her.**
- 5. Provide her with any written information that will back up her teaching/actions/decision-making.**
- 6. Provide her with educational materials to distribute.**

How would you work with this student in the future?

- 7. Develop an informal contract regarding how much time you can spend with her and what your role will be.**
- 8. When you work directly with Chana, provide feedback, especially positive feedback.**
- 9. Reiterate your confidence in her abilities, revalidate her knowledge to complete the assigned tasks, and encourage her independence.**
- 10. Ask the student about her previous clinical experiences and her personal learning style. Allowing her to share pertinent life experiences with you may help you to better understand her behavior.**
- 11. Plan ahead with the student. With some advance notice of what the clinical day will include, the student can be more adequately prepared by practicing the needed skills in the school of nursing lab, reviewing procedures and researching topics to gain the knowledge and confidence needed to be successful.**

Discuss the student's behavior and your concerns with the clinical faculty.

Scenario #3

This is your first day with Brian, a 29 year-old undergraduate nursing student from the local University. You are a Home Health nurse and have precepted students from this program in the past. The previous students were more traditional age, (about 20 years of age), female and with no medically related experience. Brian has already alluded to his former training as a nursing assistant in Home Health care. His father is a physician and he has been around hospitals all his life. He already has earned a degree in Biology and has worked in the Home Health field about 5 years.

As you begin your day of home visiting with the student, you go about working with him in the same way that you have worked with the last few students. During this first day, Brian often seems frustrated and becomes quiet for long periods. He asks to assist you but you continually decline keeping in mind that he is “just a student”. Anyway, you don’t have much time as your caseload is especially heavy because a colleague is out on sick leave. Once Brian has left and you have time to reflect on your day, you decide to make some changes.

Considering Adult Learning Principles, what might you do differently the next day you are with Brian? How could you incorporate your preceptor duties into your busy schedule? Is there any further information you may want from Brian?

KEY:

- 1. Validate with Brian his level of expertise and ask him what his learning needs and goals are.**
- 2. Include Brian in planning your schedule of visits for the day, discussing the client’s nursing needs and skills to be done.**
- 3. Decide what he will take responsibility for doing and what you will be doing.**
- 4. Provide on-going positive feedback regarding his performance and advance his level of responsibility according to his performance.**
- 5. Getting to know Brian and his strengths and areas for improvement is an essential part of successful precepting.**