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NURS 5023 Lab

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Journal # 4

1. What goal did you meet this week that you and your preceptor discussed?

This week, I successfully met my goal of improving history-taking and physical examination skills. I focused on assessments for patients presenting with respiratory symptoms. My preceptor and I discussed the importance of recognizing atypical presentations, like those seen in Mycoplasma pneumonia, and I was able to apply this knowledge during patient interactions.

1. What areas does your preceptor feel that you need to work on for next week?

My preceptor mentioned that I need to improve my ability to make quick differential diagnoses during busy clinic times. Although I have a good understanding of common conditions, the ability to prioritize and narrow down differentials in real-time remains an area for growth. I also need to continue practicing my documentation to ensure it’s concise yet thorough, especially in complex cases.

1. What did you do this week that made you feel you gained confidence in a particular area of patient care?

This week, I gained confidence in managing patients with upper respiratory infections, particularly in diagnosing and treating cases of Mycoplasma pneumonia. I was able to recognize key signs such as a dry cough and wheezing, which allowed me to suggest appropriate diagnostic tests and treatments. The positive feedback from my preceptor after discussing my plan helped reinforce my confidence in this area.

1. Reflect on a challenging clinical situation or a situation where you did not feel confident in a particular area of patient care?

A challenging situation involved a patient presenting with vague symptoms of fatigue, headache, and mild chest discomfort, which could have been indicative of multiple conditions, including Mycoplasma pneumonia or even an early case of asthma exacerbation. I struggled with narrowing down the differentials initially, as I didn’t want to overlook anything serious. I found myself questioning whether I was being too quick to rule out more serious conditions.

1. How did you handle the situation?

I took a step back and consulted with my preceptor. We reviewed the patient’s full history, including their exposure risks, and we decided to prioritize the most likely diagnoses while ordering tests that could help confirm our suspicion. I made sure to communicate thoroughly with the patient, explaining why we were ordering tests and what symptoms we were specifically watching for. I also documented the decision-making process carefully, which helped me feel more secure in my clinical reasoning.

1. What have you done, or will you do to make you feel more prepared for this same
situation in the future?

Moving forward, I will spend more time reviewing differential diagnosis decision trees for common respiratory conditions, focusing on similar presentations. I plan to practice clinical reasoning exercises and consult evidence-based guidelines when unsure. I will also continue to work on improving my communication with patients to ensure they understand the rationale behind testing and treatment plans, which will help reduce any anxiety about the diagnostic process.

1. Reflect on some areas of learning while in the clinical area that will benefit you the most in your practice.

One area of learning that has been beneficial is refining my ability to take a thorough yet concise patient history. I’ve learned to ask open-ended questions that lead to important details, and this has been especially useful in differentiating between respiratory infections and other conditions like asthma or even cardiac-related chest pain. Learning to interpret diagnostic tests and knowing when to order them has made me more confident in making clinical decisions.

1. What course objective did you address this week?

This week, I addressed the course objective of improving diagnostic reasoning and clinical decision-making, particularly in diagnosing and treating respiratory infections like Mycoplasma pneumonia. By practicing patient assessments, interpreting diagnostic tests, and determining treatment plans, I was able to apply my knowledge in a real-world setting. This also included working on patient education and explaining treatment plans clearly, which aligns with my goal of enhancing communication skills.

1. Describe how you integrated one of the SON’s Professional Pillars during your clinical
experience this week.

I integrated the pillar of patient-centered care. I focused on listening carefully to my patients' concerns, allowing them to share their symptoms in detail, and ensuring that I addressed their questions about the treatment plan. In the case of a patient with a respiratory illness, I took the time to explain the reasoning behind our treatment choices, such as choosing a macrolide for Mycoplasma pneumonia and made sure the patient felt comfortable with the plan moving forward. This approach not only increased the patient's satisfaction but also helped build trust in the care process.