

# LEARNING ACTIVITY

## Clinically Speaking: When things go wrong (answers)

In these film clips Chris, a second year nursing student, receives feedback from her facilitator that she has not followed contact precautions. You can see how Chris deals with the situation. Would you behave in the same way?

### Before you watch the film clips

1. If you are caring for a patient who has MRSA, what infection control precautions are you required to follow? Before going into the room, what would you actually do to follow these precautions?

Do hand hygiene and put on gloves and gown

2. What would you do if you saw other healthcare staff not following the correct procedure?

I would make sure I follow the correct procedure. I would talk with my facilitator if I wanted to discuss this further

### Watch 'when things go wrong'

3. Why did Chris enter the room without putting on her gloves and gown?

Because she thought the patient needed help immediately

4. Do you think Chris's decision to enter the room using only hand hygiene was a safe decision? Why or why not?

No because it was a contact precaution room and she needed to wear gloves and gown to prevent transmission of MRSA

5. Karen, the facilitator, says that Chris needs to wear gloves and gown to protect Chris from infections that patients may have. Is there another reason why it is important to wear gloves and gown (who else may be at risk of infection)?

To protect the patient from infections that may be transferred by the nurse through contact

### Talking to your facilitator: responding to feedback

Part of the facilitator's role is to give you feedback about your practice. They may talk to you about things that you have not done correctly. How you respond to this feedback is important. Watch how Chris responds to the facilitator's feedback and answer the following questions:

#### Demonstrating understanding

6. What does Chris do and say that shows she is listening to and understanding the facilitator's comments?

She makes eye contact; she gives verbal feedback, 'yes'; she looks serious, as if she is carefully considering what the facilitator is saying (she is not smiling)

#### Responding to criticism

Chris explains to Karen, her facilitator, why she did not use contact precautions. Sometimes, giving an explanation can come across as being defensive, that is, it may seem as if you are more interested in trying to persuade your facilitator that you did the right thing, rather than carefully considering the facilitator's feedback.

In this clip, Chris gives the impression that she is carefully considering Karen's feedback even though she offers an explanation for her behaviour (that she has seen other hospital staff enter patients' rooms without using contact precautions).

7. What does Chris do, and what does she say that gives the impression that she is carefully listening to Karen's feedback? (think about the words she uses, the tone of voice she uses, and her facial expression).

She agrees with what Karen is saying

She makes eye contact with Karen

She offers an explanation as to why she thought it was okay to go into the room without gloves and gown

When she is giving the explanation, she uses a tentative tone of voice (that is, she does not sound very sure)

She uses language that is tentative 'I thought it would be okay' which also suggests that she could be wrong

#### Explaining your behaviour: Using a professional manner

Here are some other phrases you could use to talk about why you might have done something that your facilitator tells you is incorrect. Which of these phrases do you think it would be appropriate to use with your facilitator?

- But I've seen other people do it ✗
- Everybody else goes in without gloves and gown ✗
- Yes, I was a bit confused but I've seen other people doing it ✓

- I thought I was supposed to follow contact precautions but then I saw the other staff not using gloves and gown ✓

\* If you begin your response to the facilitator by telling him/her that you agree with the feedback before you go on to explain why you behaved that way, it shows that you are listening to what the facilitator is saying. It also shows that you understand the correct procedure. If you disagree first, it may seem like you are rejecting what your facilitator is telling you.

### **What if you don't agree with the feedback?**

Sometimes your facilitator or a staff member might give you feedback that you do not agree with. This can be difficult. You could begin your response with 'I understand the policies on xxx but in this case xxx (and explain why you were doing what you were doing).'

### **Watch the clip 'The next time'**

8. What does Chris clarify with the patient when the patient calls out?

'Are you feeling okay?'

9. What does Chris do while she puts on her gloves and gown to reassure the patient?

She tells the patient that she is just putting gloves on and will only be a short time.

### **Learning more: talking to the nurse educator**

#### **Watch the film clip**

10. Why do students need to be familiar with policies and procedures?

All staff and students are required to practice according to these policies and procedures. They give students information about what they need to do; they guide their practice; they support practice.

11. Chris points out that some staff has not been following hospital procedures. What does the educator say in response to this?

She thanks Chris and says it is a bit worrying that hospital staff is not following procedures. She says she will talk to the staff about it.

12. Chris wants to know if she should say something to nurses if she sees they are not following contact precautions. What does the educator suggest Chris should do in this situation? What do you think of the educator's advice?

She says it would be great if Chris could advocate for her patients. To do this, she suggests Chris could ask the RN a question, for example, 'should we be wearing gloves and gown going into this room?' The educator explains that this is a non-confrontational way to ask. The educator says that if nurses are discouraging Chris from following contact precautions, she should talk to her facilitator or the educator.

13. The educator says that ‘sometimes people make decisions because they might be **cutting corners**, and it’s not very, **it’s not a very safe corner to cut**’. What do you think she means by ‘cutting corners’ and in this film clip, what corners are being cut?

Cutting corners means to not follow procedures properly. This could be because staff are in a hurry and want to do things quickly. In the film clip, it means staff members are not following hygiene precautions properly.

14. What do you think the most important message is that the educator gives Chris?

Chris needs to be familiar with hospital policies and should always follow contact precautions. Also, the facilitator and other staff, for example, the educators are people who can support the student and discuss concerns.

### Interrupting and asking questions

When you are on clinical placement, you may have to interrupt people to ask them questions or ask them for guidance. In this film clip, the meeting between Chris and the educator had been arranged so Chris:

- Knocks
- Introduces herself
- Gives the reason why she is visiting the nurse educator: ‘I’d like to know about the hospital policy ...’

Usually the meeting will not be arranged and you need to get the RN's or the facilitator's or educator's attention and find out if they have time to talk to you. Sometimes you will be able to see that they are busy and you might choose to talk to them later.

Here are some phrases you could use if you are interrupting. Some of these are for small things you might want to talk about, some of them are more appropriate if you want to talk about bigger issues that may take longer. Use these phrases to help you to think about what you would say in clinical situations.

Do you have five minutes to talk about xxx?

I was wondering if I could just ask you about xxx

Can I make a time to see you when you are not busy to talk about xxx?

Can I just ask you a quick question?

15. Use the above phrases to help you think about what you would say in the following scenarios:

- Your facilitator has told you that you need to find out where all hospital policies and procedures are located and to identify two that are important for you at the moment. What would you say?

Excuse me [name of RN if you know it] I was wondering if I could just ask you where I can find...?

Excuse me [name of RN if you know it] do you know where I can find the policies?

- You are on your first placement and have been asked to get a slipper pan. You are in the pan room and can see two different kinds of pans but you are not sure which pan is the slipper pan. A registered nurse is in the room. You turn to her to ask for her help. What would you say?

Excuse me, can you tell me which pan is a slipper pan?

- You are concerned about an issue on the ward between you and your buddy nurse. You want to talk about it with your facilitator in a private space. What would you say?

Excuse me [name of facilitator]; I was wondering if I could make a time with you to talk about something that happened on my shift.