

Case Study - Adult Nursing



I am a sister on an acute medical ward in a National Health Service hospital, caring for 28 patients. In accordance with the governing body, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, I am accountable for all my actions and omissions. My work is largely informed by the **National Health Service Act 2006**, the **Health and Social Care Act 2008**, the **Darzi Report**, the **Human Rights Act 1998** and other discrimination legislation (part of the **Equality Bill**). My responsibilities are many, but my key duty is to ensure the ratio of staff to patients is adequate to provide safe and effective care.

One of my first tasks of the day is to ensure that patient conditions and needs are communicated to the multi-disciplinary teams. This must happen in a confidential manner to ensure the dignity and privacy of the patient, as guided by the requirements of the **Data Protection Act 1998** and the **Human Rights Act 1998**. This communication is vital to enable the correct treatment to be administered and to ensure consistency of patient care and treatment. After liaising with the teams my next task is to check that the patients in my care are also provided with enough information to make informed choices about their activities of daily living.

Part of my role is to administer medicines. It is important to know that withholding medicines could be classed as abuse and their administration is, therefore, a task taken seriously. We use a key phrase and good prompt to describe this part of the job: "The right medicine to the right patient by the right route at the right time." This reminds us of the importance of our actions and the task we are responsible for.

As patients are from a wide variety of backgrounds we accommodate a range of religious ceremonies, such as regular prayer and fasting times or other dietary requirements. If necessary, I liaise with the multi disciplinary team about any of these items to ensure that we can meet the patients' needs.

At visiting time I ensure that hand sanitising gel is available for visitors to use as they enter and exit the ward, in order to prevent infection being brought into the environment. Visitors often ask for information about their relatives in our care. I have to ensure that the information I provide is not only accurate, but also given with the permission of the patient.

My responsibility for the ward includes ensuring compliance with the **Health and Safety Act 1974**. For example, I must ensure that fire equipment is working and that fire exits are free from obstruction. I am also responsible for ensuring that all areas are accessible to visitors, in accordance with the **Disability Discrimination Act 1995**.

It is fulfilling to know that my role is to provide a safe and comfortable environment for the patients and visitors. I make it my priority to ensure that the needs and choices of our patients are met by the multi professional team, through good communication both within the team and with the patient.