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Humanities KSL5

Statement of Principles and Rationale

My nursing mission is to use my knowledge, skills, and compassion to make a difference in the lives of the people I meet. To accomplish this goal, I provide compassionate holistic care to patients, families, and community in accordance with cultural and religious beliefs, inspire trust using authentic presence, employ best practices in nursing care, provide equal care to all without biases or judgements, and strive for a work-life balance.

Nursing, as a profession, combines science with the art of caring and is a therapeutic healing partnership between nurse and patient. I provide skilled, competent, and empathetic care to my patients and their families to help foster, educate, and empower my patients toward their health goals. My personal philosophy is to put myself in the shoes of every person I meet and act accordingly. How would I want to be treated? What would be the best approach to connect with this individual? In order to foster a therapeutic healing partnership, it requires trust, caring, honesty, vulnerability, and equanimity. This is a true partnership between the nurse and patient towards a common goal: the patient’s wellbeing. Seeing the patient as a unique whole requires that we change our perspectives from physician-ordered tasks to learning and achieving the goals of the patient, taking into account their cultural and religious beliefs. It requires that we are authentically present to connect with our patients on a deeper level. Sometimes the goals of the patients are not aligned with those of the healthcare team. Nurses are called upon as patient advocates and as such, must be the voice of the patient towards their personal goals. As an oncology nurse, I have had to advocate for patients who wished for comfort care measures versus invasive procedures. Sometimes we have to see the whole picture to see what would be best for the patient. One of the barriers in implementing the holistic view of the patient is the time constraints allotted to nurses to establish that crucial connection with their patients. With so many patients and so many orders from physicians, it can be a challenge to make the human to human connections that are necessary to inspire the trust needed for a true healing partnership.

Inspiring trust using authentic presence should not be a task to be done but should be a natural extension of a caring nurse. Encouraging these human to human connections is the heart of nursing. It is what drives us and makes nurses act as patient advocates. To be authentically present requires the nurse to be fully present and tune out everything else that would hamper making these crucial connections. I partner with my patients and their families to provide patient-centered care based on the unique physical, psychological, spiritual, and emotional needs of each patient. In our fast-paced profession, carving out a few moments to spend quality time with our patients should be a priority above the physician-ordered tasks. But this is not possible since our healthcare system has become regimented by specific timetables of when and how long to give meds, how long to give a bath, or how long to complete a discharge. We must move away from these timetables and be able to give quality time with our patients in order to inspire the trust needed to elevate the nursing practice.

Another way to elevate the nursing practice is to employ best nursing care. Practice is established through evidence-based research and is an ever-evolving field. I vow to keep educated on the evidence-based research in order to promote the best patient outcomes. As a nurse leader, I am committed to improving patient outcomes and have joined many committees throughout the hospital with that goal in mind. These committees serve as platforms to keep nurses and nurse leaders abreast of the newest practices that could improve patient outcomes. Unfortunately, these committees require that nurses come in during their days off to attend. With staffing issues, it is very rare that a nurse will be pulled out of care in order to attend a committee meeting. How are our nurses supposed to keep up with the ever-evolving field of evidence-based research? I believe that the education department at our facilities could be better at offering classes to educate the staff. Also maybe we can advocate for ourselves and ask our supervisors to increase staffing on some days so that nurses can be relieved to attend committee meetings.

Another way to elevate the nursing practice would be to provide nurses with classes to explore their own personal biases as it relates to nursing care. A core principle in my vision of caring revolves around providing nonjudgmental care to all. Knowing oneself and our own strengths and weaknesses can only make us better at giving care to others. This self-reflection allows nurses to provide equal care to all patients without biases or judgements. Sometimes it is these biases and preconceived judgements that hamper the nurse’s ability to establish true connections with their patients and their families. As a new assistant nurse manager, I was given “leadership classes” to help jumpstart these self-reflections, but I believe that all nurses could benefit from these types of classes. But these classes also teach the nurse to have better relationships with everyone in their lives, not just within the hospital.

The last way that I ensure I can care for others is to strive for a work-life balance. I believe that as a nurse, it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle so I can set a good example to my patients, and care for them to the best of my physical and mental ability. Nursing is a profession where we give of ourselves (physically, psychologically, spiritually, and emotionally) in order to help our patients with their health goals. How are we to continually give of ourselves without refueling? This program has taught me that self-care and self-compassion are necessary for nurses. This work-life balance is necessary to replenish our own spirits so that we may continue in our nursing profession. As a new nurse leader, I wanted to prove that I deserved my new title, but I have slowly learned that work cannot be my life. In the words Anonymous, “*Taking time to live life will only inspire your work*.”My family deserves the same if not more of time than work does. Maintaining a work-life balance is important so that I can give my patients the best of my physical and mental ability.