**Journal for Weeks 4 – 6**

In this second journal entry, I highlight my role transition clinical experiences at the neuro/ortho unit of Resurrection Medical Center, 7435 W Talcott Ave, Chicago, IL 60631located in 2-West. A reflection of these experiences pertaining to the skills and knowledge I gained during this period is particularly important for my future development as a registered nurse. The perspectives cover three domains of role transition including cognitive learning, affective and transitioning experiences, and critical thinking synthesis.

**Cognitive Learning**

The period was an opportunity for me to reinforce the skills I had learned in the previous weeks of my clinical placement as I continued to work in the same unit. Medication administration and observation of adverse effects was my key role whereby I was involved in a routine administration of drugs to the patient independently. This exercise also enabled me to gain more knowledge about drugs and the six rights of medication administration including the right patient, right medication, right dose, right route, right time and right documentation. However, my ability to work independently was limited to only the common medications such as penicillin antibiotics and routes of administration per-oral (PO), intravenous (IV), intramuscular (IM), and subcutaneous (SubQ) among others. I, therefore, utilized this period to learn the complicated administration techniques such as epidural anesthesia under expert supervision.

I also used this duration to augment my skills in tracheostomy (trach) suctioning, foley insertion, gastrostomy tube (G-Tube) feedings and nasal cannula (NC) use. These are complex procedures that are I am yet to master effectively and therefore I still need to work under supervision to be able to perform them independently. Nevertheless, I demonstrated excellent skills in other areas such as professional communication and efficient clinical reporting.

**Affective and Transitioning Experiences**

I feel that my experiences during this clinical placement have prepared me to be a competent nurse and I am ready to join the nursing profession as a qualified registered nurse. In addition to having a good understanding of most nursing concepts and knowledge, I learned all the basic skills and techniques required in nursing practice and I look forward to sharpening my skills in the few remaining areas during practice. My emphasis on the provision of evidence-based nursing care with knowledge translation into practice is another key strength that is important for nursing practice. However, I still need to improve in some areas including quality improvements and provision of holistic care that encompasses all aspects of human being ranging from physical to spiritual well-being. This experience, in general, makes me feel competent transitioning to the role of professional nurse. This transition is promoted by both personal determination and hard work and external factors such as family support, proper mentorship and favorable work environment.

**Critical Thinking Synthesis**

Most of our patients at the unit were aged people requiring surgery due to a fall resulting in bone displacement or fracture. Moreover, they were using assistive devices such as walkers or canes to help them with movement. One day I was helping one of the patients with a hip dislocation to get out of bed but due to his heavy weight, he almost fell down. My priority was to prevent the patient from falling as this would worsen his condition. I, therefore, struggled to maintain his support as I called for help from other staff members. I learned from this situation that working in ortho/neuro unit requires tremendous physical skills to support and maintain patient balance.