

Module 10 - Relationships with Patients and/or Family

Activity #1

Appropriate or Inappropriate – Identify whether the following actions are appropriate or inappropriate. Discuss/compare your answers as a class.

Action	Appropriate or Inappropriate?
Giving your personal cell phone number to your patient and/or patient's family	
Visiting your patient on the weekend when you are not assigned to work	
Your patient's son asks you to be his friend on Facebook and you accept	
Speaking to the patient in a gentle, kind voice	
Accepting a small gift, no more than a \$10 value	
Kissing your patient on the cheek each day before you leave	
Informing the patient that their physician has a bad reputation in the community	
Holding your patient's hand when he/she cries	
Providing silence during a time of sadness for the patient	
Talking with your patient about your personal finances	
Allowing your patient's spouse to fix your car	
Allowing your 4-year-old patient to sit on your lap	
Your patient's adult child asks you on a date and you accept	

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Activity #1 – Faculty Guide

Appropriate or Inappropriate – Identify whether the following actions are appropriate or inappropriate. Discuss/compare your answers as a class.

Action	Appropriate or Inappropriate?
Giving your personal cell phone number to your patient and/or patient's family	Inappropriate
Visiting your patient on the weekend when you are not assigned to work	Inappropriate
Your patient's son asks you to be his friend on Facebook and you accept	Inappropriate
Speaking to the patient in a gentle, kind voice	Appropriate
Accepting a small gift, no more than a \$10 value	Inappropriate
Kissing your patient on the cheek each day before you leave	Inappropriate
Informing the patient that their physician has a bad reputation in the community	Inappropriate
Holding your patient's hand when he/she cries	Appropriate
Providing silence during a time of sadness for the patient	Appropriate
Talking with your patient about your personal finances	Inappropriate
Allowing your patient's spouse to fix your car	Inappropriate
Allowing your 4-year-old patient to sit on your lap	Appropriate
Your patient's adult child asks you on a date and you accept	Inappropriate

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Activity #2

Case Scenarios – Giving and Receiving Gifts

#1

You are a home care aide working with a pediatric patient. Your patient is 3 years old with some moderate retardation and has seizures as a result of being shaken as a baby. You have become particularly attached to her. She comes from a poor family with a poor social support system. Her mother works long days and her father is in prison related to the child's abuse. On her birthday, you spend at least \$40 in presents for her and make her a cake. The patient is thrilled, which makes you feel good. The next day, the patient's brother says, "My birthday was two weeks ago, why didn't you give me a present?"

Discuss the possible consequences of this scenario.

What should the home care aide have done differently?

#2

You have been caring for an elderly couple at their home periodically for many years. Often, they serve you a cup of coffee and toast before you go to your next patient. You consider it your coffee break, and it gives the couple some much needed social contact. One day the woman gives you the coffee cup and saucer to take home. When you ask why she is giving it to you, she says, "Because it is yours. You always use it. We are giving away things we can't take to the nursing home." When you mention the incident to a co-worker she says, "You should never have taken it. They might later accuse you of stealing it. In fact, you shouldn't even accept a cup of coffee."

Do you agree with the co-worker about the gift? Why or why not?

Do you agree with the co-worker about having coffee together? Why or why not?

What should the home care aide have done differently?

Adapted from CRNBC/Nov 2006. Pub. No. 406. Nurse-Client Relationships.

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Faculty Answer Guide:

#1

You are a home care aide working with a pediatric patient. Your patient is 3 years old with some moderate retardation and has seizures as a result of being shaken as a baby. You have become particularly attached to her. She comes from a poor family with a poor social support system. Her mother works long days and her father is in prison related to the child's abuse. On her birthday, you spend at least \$40 in presents for her and make her a cake. The patient is thrilled, which makes you feel good. The next day, the patient's brother says, "My birthday was two weeks ago, why didn't you give me a present?"

In your enthusiasm to do something special for a disadvantaged child, you inadvertently singled out an individual patient. You did not carefully consider the broader implications of giving gifts to one child. As a result, another child felt excluded. The gifts may be seen as an attempt by you to create a special, personal relationship beyond the boundaries of the home care aide-patient relationship. The reaction of the mother to her child receiving gifts is not known. The gifts and cake may create an element of mistrust if the mother is concerned about you putting the family at a disadvantage and alienating her child's affection. You will now need to discuss the gifts with the child's mother, noting your good intent, but acknowledging that you overstepped the boundaries of the home care aide-patient relationship. You will also need to report the incident to your supervisor and follow your agency's policy from this point forward.

#1

You have been caring for an elderly couple at their home periodically for many years. Often, they serve you a cup of coffee and toast before you go to your next patient. You consider it your coffee break, and it gives the couple some much needed social contact. One day the woman gives you the coffee cup and saucer to take home. When you ask why she is giving it to you, she says, "Because it is yours. You always use it. We are giving away things we can't take to the nursing home." When you mention the incident to a colleague she says, "You should never have taken it. They might later accuse you of stealing it. In fact, you shouldn't even accept a cup of coffee."

Accepting a cup of coffee and taking time to socialize with this couple can be considered part of the therapeutic plan, but you should not consider it your coffee break as that would be blurring your personal and professional roles. You should not accept the cup and saucer. It may have no monetary value, but it may have value for the family. It is unlikely you would be accused of theft, but it is not beyond the realm of possibility. You need to explore the intent of the gift with the couple. They view you as their own child and expect an ongoing personal relationship with you. It may be a part of terminating the home care aide-patient relationship. You can then respond to their intent and gracefully decline the gift, explaining that you will always have the memories of the couple, but cannot accept the gift. It is helpful if there is an agency policy you can quote or reference.

Adapted from CRNBC/Nov 2006. Pub. No. 406. Nurse-Client Relationships.

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Activity #3 - Matching

Patients and/or family members may not always understand what they are doing or saying is inappropriate. It is important to be clear and direct, however not rude, when correcting a behavior.

Match the possible response to the inappropriate behavior.

- _____ 1. A family member makes sexual advances.
- _____ 2. A patient asks the home care aide to wash all her windows inside and out.
- _____ 3. A patient asks you about your personal life.
- _____ 4. A family member gives you a gift.
- _____ 5. A patient tries to show you her wound site and tells you that it is bothering her. She wants you to tell her what to do about it.
 - a. "I'm only allowed to do certain tasks for you, and that is not listed on your care plan."
 - b. "That makes me uncomfortable. I will have to leave if you continue to say/do that."
 - c. "That is not something I can help you with, but I would be happy to assist you with calling the nurse or your doctor for you. I will be glad to dial the number and let you speak with them so that you can tell them in your own words what is bothering you."
 - d. "It is agency policy that I cannot accept that. I appreciate you thinking of me though."
 - e. "I really can't talk about my personal life while I am on the job."

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Activity #3 – Matching: Answers

1. b

2. a

3. e

4. d

5. c

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Activity #4 – Take Home Exercise

Each student is to produce 5 examples of inappropriate behaviors and a statement to stop that behavior. Share with the class.

1. Inappropriate Behavior: _____

Home Care Aide Response: _____

2. Inappropriate Behavior: _____

Home Care Aide Response: _____

3. Inappropriate Behavior: _____

Home Care Aide Response: _____

4. Inappropriate Behavior: _____

Home Care Aide Response: _____

5. Inappropriate Behavior: _____

Home Care Aide Response: _____

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Activity #5

Role Playing

Divide into groups of 3 or 4. Each group should create its own role play of a situation where there is an inappropriate behavior or boundary crossing of some sort. The group should then re-demonstrate their scenario with appropriate behavior. Try to use a previous experience that you have faced.

Teaching tip – keep the groups focused on the task at hand. Establish a time frame and keep to the established time frame. It is important to be clear with reminders as the time frame is drawing near such as, “You have 3 (or 5 or 2) minutes left.”

After watching all the role plays, do other students have other suggestions for how that same scenario could have been demonstrated in an appropriate manner?

Have you even been faced with one of these scenarios? What did you do?