

ALPS CASE STUDIES; Patient Safety map discussion

2 Non-patient incident.

A Dietetic student rushed onto a ward, worried she was late to see a patient. She had just come from a very interesting conference and had a large bag containing information and literature from this conference. All students are asked not to take bags onto the ward for health and safety reasons.

Whilst the dietetic student was talking with the patient, a physiotherapy student was walking up and down the ward with a (different) patient, and caught her foot in the trailing strap of the dietetic student's bag, and fell. The patient was unharmed, but could easily have fallen too, without support from the physiotherapy student who bruised her knee badly and cut her knee.

This was definitely a "near miss"

Safe Practice Environment

The main link to situational awareness is, because the student was in a rush she/he did not take into account the environment at all. Either the ward situation or other people's activity, the position of the bag. The student was so focussed on the "job" the context was forgotten.

Element; *the student systematically gathers and synthesises information on the service user's status, which may impact on their safety*

Criteria; *the student draws on a recognised framework which informs the gathering, analysis and synthesis of information (for eg SBARR)*

The student gathers verifies information gathered from a variety of sources

The student is able to process the information within an acceptable time frame

Element; *the student recognises the significance of the environment around the service user and the passage of time*

Criteria; *the student identifies and responds to any threat to the service user from other people*

The student identifies and responds to any threat to the service user from equipment or the use of equipment. (In this case the bag).

The student recognises changes in the timeliness of assessment and any response required.

Comment; situational awareness is an important aspect of working within healthcare. Focus on a particular task in hand is known to put patients at risk from lack of awareness of what is going on around. In this scenario it was the risk to another service user and a colleague (ie another professional)

Responsibilities and limitations of own practice

The comment here is to ensure that students behaves professionally at all times and understands the impact of poor time management can have on patient safety.

Element; *the student has a clear understanding of their delegated responsibilities with regard to service user safety*

Criteria; *the student asks for training if they are unsure of their own skills*

The student understands the environment in respect to service user safety

The student adheres to professional codes of practice, conduct and ethics

Element; *the student recognises their limitations and does not act outside their scope of practice*

Criteria; *The student adheres to professional codes of practice, conduct and ethics*

The student recognises what they are capable of and what they need to learn

Element; *the student reports and, if necessary, escalates any concerns about a service user's safety*

Criteria; *the student knows the organisational procedures for reporting service user safety incidents*

The student maintains confidentiality but recognises when exceptions may be made

Comments; this may appear quite "strong" when we are discussing time management issue with a student, but hopefully it illustrates what an impact it can have on patient safety (and the safety of colleagues!)

Documentation and service user records

We need to encourage students to record properly any "near misses" and not just actual harm to patients and others.

Element; *the student records service user details according to legal, professional, course and placement provider requirements*

Criteria; *the student keeps accurate up to date legible records.*

The student should be able to use the different modes of record keeping eg paper, electronic

The student understands the accepted terminology and abbreviations when documenting service user records

the student knows when and how to report information to others

Element; *the student ensures that the records are handled in accordance with organisational requirements*

Criteria; *the student knows how to complete legible records*

The student knows how and where to store records

The student keeps all records and information according to legislation, standards, organisational policies and procedures.

Effective teamwork and communication

Comment; the student needs to be aware of the usefulness of communicating with the wider team, even if they are not actually working together at the time. In business of the ward environment.

Element; *the student collaborates with team colleagues regardless of position or profession*

Criteria; *the student informs a supervisor if they, or the service user, has been placed at unnecessary risk*

The student reflects on performance and is open, honest and transparent.