

Cassidy Godin

Graduate School Application - Essay

Prompt:

Describe an experience where you provided holistic, compassionate, and respectful care in partnership with a patient and their family that facilitated shared-decision making that resulted in the promotion of safe and effective outcomes. Use evidence-based examples to support your response.

Holistic nursing care revolves around caring for the entire person. This encourages care providers to look beyond just the physical aspects of health and treatment, and evaluate other aspects of the patients lives to determine the best course of action for treatment (Frisch & Rabinowitsch, 2019). These holistic approaches can range in type, but often in pediatrics it includes collaboration with caregivers, incorporating distractions, and using toys. These tactics often reduce anxiety, pain, and other stress responses (Bice & Wyatt, 2017).

When I was a new pediatric nurse, I worked inpatient on Grant 8 at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center. I was on a stretch of shifts, which included me having a specific patient multiple days in a row. This patient had leukodystrophy and had just moved out of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit on comfort care. I had the ability to collaborate with her mom, who was her only family around. I was able to use holistic approaches such as empathy and silence to elicit responses about this patient's final days. I often spoke with her mother, and asked her what she would like for the memory box. I gave her some options and was able to give her the space and time she needed to determine what the best course of action was. Her mom was making

impossible decisions, but with the help of holistic care approaches, we were able to collaborate and come up with a plan.

In the shifts leading up to this patient's final day – we painted her hands and feet to make long lasting memories. Her mom had decided that she wanted to cut her long ponytail off to keep, after she had passed, and so I spent time braiding it. This was such an impactful experience during my career, and it reminded me why I practice holistic nursing. When this patient passed, her mother thanked me for everything I had done for them and for the time I had spent making the remembrance hand/footprints. I truly believe that this care coordination and taking the extra time to talk with the patient's mother helped her cope and start the grieving process. This deeply impacted me and allowed me to recognize that I had made a lifelong impact on a family who was going through the worst time in their lives.

As a Family Nurse Practitioner, I am excited to be able to incorporate my skills in leadership, compassion, and time management, to better patient outcomes through holistic approaches. I believe the role of an advanced practice nurse is to coordinate care, advance outcomes, and provide access to the community. I would like to work in pediatrics when I finish, and be in either primary care or oncology. I have worked in pediatrics thus far throughout my career, and I have always felt drawn to pediatrics. My childhood bestfriend was often inpatient as he struggled with an autoimmune disease and cancer. He has since passed away, but I will always remember his family talking so highly of the nurses and the staff that took care of him. I have known ever since then, that I wanted to take care of children. I have had the privilege in my short 2.5 years of nursing experience to have worked with 3 different populations. I have worked with children who were medically hospitalized, those who were psychiatrically hospitalized, and now

outpatient with the school population. This has allowed me to expand my knowledge and skill sets. I am excited to learn even more and become a Family Nurse Practitioner.

References

- Bice AA, Wyatt TH. Holistic Comfort Interventions for Pediatric Nursing Procedures: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*. 2017; 35(3), 280-295.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010116660397>
- Frisch, N. C., & Rabinowitsch, D. (2019). What's in a Definition? Holistic Nursing, Integrative Health Care, and Integrative Nursing: Report of an Integrated Literature Review. *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, 37(3), 260–272. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0898010119860685>