



Introducing Professional Practice

A day in the life of a hospital ward: Ward Sister

Staff nurse

Hello – Ward 29 – staff nurse. Can I help you? Erm, she normally is she's not actually working at the moment she's on maternity leave at the moment.

Jackie

We work three shifts. First shift half past seven till half past three that's called the morning shift. The late shift starts at quarter past one and finishes about quarter past nine, then the night shift starts at quarter to nine at night and finishes at quarter to eight, in the morning. The shift I'm mainly work for continuation things is mainly the morning shift and we come on about seven thirty, and we have to take a hand-over from the night staff, so they tell us any changes that have happened to the patients overnight. Then usually start giving out the medications, and then once that's under way I either manage to get finished with that or the doctors come on and do the ward rounds. So the ward rounds then start, and they can go on for quite some time, and I usually end up doing those.

Woman Dr.

That's negative isn't it?

Jackie

Yeah...His biggest problem is that he, he hiccups all the time to the point where, he can hardly he can't swallow he can't talk, and it's a constant thing. Apparently when they were scoping him last night it was, a problem, and that seems to make him vomit.

Doctor

Hi

Rodney

Hi

Doctor

My name's Doctor King – I'm the doctor that works on the ward, alright. How are you doing?

Rodney

Well apart from hiccups not too bad.

Doctor

Is this a new thing or...?

Rodney

It is I've sort of brought them with me and I don't want to take them home but er.

Doctor

How long have you had them for now then?

Rodney

About, going on for about a fortnight well enough isn't it.

Doctor

Erm.

Rodney

I think I've got them permanent

Doctor

That's strange. Do you get them at night or...

Rodney

Oh yeah, I get them all day

Jackie

Constant...making himself very popular

Rodney

Yeah, and I can't control them that's the problem I mean....[fade down]

Man

fade up]...that's why they never have it at chemist.

Woman

Pardon.

Doctor

Nifedopin

Woman

Is that what it is?

Doctor

Yeah.

Woman

Oh right. Well it's a really common one.

Doctor

It's just got a posh name.

Man

Yeah.

Woman

And er have you got these down as well because he has...

Doctor

Yes we've got those yeah.

Woman

You'll have to get repeat prescription for that...

Jackie

Well what will happen is our pharmacist will bring all....[fade down]

Jackie

In the meantime there's usually the physiotherapist, dieticians, social workers, occupational therapists, usually coming on to the ward and wanting to sort of have some communication about their patients that they're caring for. So, I jig in and out of the ward round talking to them. Then usually it's a case of helping out, doing some sort of caring for the patients, if they need assistance with say dressings or something like that that they...maybe the

unqualified nurse who's looking after the patients are doing, that can't do those things if they're doing some kind of observation, such as the health care assistants don't do blood pressures or, they don't take blood sugar measurements so I'd do those for them as well. Usually there's a lot of telephone calls to be made and a lot of the conversation on the telephone. That's the normal course of events up to about eleven or twelve o'clock and then you usually do the medicine round again. Then in the afternoon there might be another ward round, if not then usually it's erm people's relatives have come to visit so there's usually a lot of talking to patients and their relatives in the afternoon. Catching up with other things from the morning such a social problems or, OT things. Sometimes go, there's der...various meetings that I go to such as we have a sisters meeting. Or if I have to go see the nurse manager about the budget or something like that. So sometimes in the afternoon I'm off the ward for an hour or so doing things like that. Then we usually hand-over the patients to the staff that come on in the afternoon, and I usually do that, and about half past three it's time to go home.