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“My most memorable client or experience: Describe a situation in which your nursing care made a difference.”

I would first like to share with you an example of how the principles of self-determination have helped me become a better patient advocate for one of my students.

This particular student, who I will call Chad, is a 22-year-old special need individual. He has several things wrong with him, including a genetic anomaly, scoliosis, chronic aspiration pneumonia is MRSA positive in his urine and has behavior issues, as well as no speech.

Chad began having problems with urinary retention, and was hospitalized for this. He returned to school with the orders that he was only to be catheterized at school, because nursing care was available. I received a phone call from his mom, having grave concerns over this order, as I had. I pursued this issue with the group home he was living in, and the physician's office, only to meet resistance. I was told that was the order and to follow it, because Medicaid would not pay for in home nursing services, since the order was temporary and he was NOT in a medical group home, instead a behavior home, and it was not under the licensure to have the staff trained to cath him.

I was very frustrated, at one point asking who was advocating for Chad's needs? Not for Medicaid's needs. I felt that asking us to cath Chad 2 times in a 6 hour period and then have him go almost 19 hours without being cathed again, was not only inhumane, but also unethical.

I made my concerns known to both the staff at the group home and the physician and several nurses at this physician's office. How can you be in the profession of helping someone, when your looking away from the someone that needs help? I obeyed the order, cathing Chad 2x daily, and then faxing over his specific Intake and Output's daily, of what he had urinated on his own, and the significant amounts we were cathing him for each time (500-900 cc's)- His abdomen was rock hard, and very distended. I involved our social worker team in this issue, and together our advocacy, resolved the issue. Some how they found not only the money, but also the visiting nurses to continue to cath Chad at home too. I feel very proud that I took this issue to the maximum of advocacy. Chad could have become septic and died as a result of this obvious neglect and "conviene" of utilization of free nursing services. Has that what health care has come down too?

Chad could not act on his own self-determination, as he has no ability to vocalize the kind of discomfort he must have been in. It was my appropriate interventions, with the help from both staff and his parent that made this a success story, and my most memorable time when my nursing care, truly made a difference in someone's life.