Professional Boundaries for the Nursing Assistant

Marlene Foreman, BSN, MN, ACNS-BC, ACHPN®

Disclosures

Marlene Foreman has no real or perceived conflicts of interest that relate to this presentation.

Objectives

1. Explain the difference between social and professional relationships
2. Describe professional boundaries in hospice and palliative care
3. Discuss consequences of ineffective boundaries
### Social and Professional Relationships

- What is a social relationship?
- What is a professional relationship?
- Type of relationship of nursing assistant to patient, patient’s family, coworkers
- Meeting expectations of patient/family within context of nursing assistant role

### Professional Boundaries

- What is a boundary?
- What is a professional boundary?
- How do you stay within your boundaries?
- What behaviors may indicate that you have crossed the boundary?

### Ineffective Boundaries

- How does this affect your personal life?
- How does this affect your professional life?
- Consequences of developing or maintaining ineffective boundaries
- How do ineffective boundaries affect your personal life and health?
- How can you strengthen boundaries?
Case Study

You are at a patient’s home providing direct care. The daughter of the patient states that she will be out of town this weekend and the patient will be alone.

You immediately suggest that you could stay with the patient for the weekend for a fee to be decided between you and the daughter. You give her your cell phone number.

Questions

• Name 2 things that were done that blurs boundaries
• What 2 roles would this nursing assistant play?
• What are the consequences of this decision?
• If the nursing assistant works for the agency 5 days a week and the patient 2 days, what about time off?
• What will the nursing assistant’s family do while he/she is gone?
• Will they resent this interference?

Discussion

• What are the consequences of giving patients your cell phone number?
• What are the consequences of this dual role of nursing assistant and employee of the daughter?
References

• Milgrom, “Differences between professional and social relationships” British Columbia Rehabilitation Society, 1992.

References