

Departmental Rotation Emergency Room

Using the objectives listed below as a **guide** will help you to have a successful rotation in this department. Please remember that you are a visitor in an actual work environment and that patient safety and comfort are the priority of your preceptors. Your visit may be interrupted if they become very busy, please wait patiently until they are free to resume working with you.

The primary mission of the Emergency Room Department is to provide the public access to primary medical care. The Emergency Room Department (ER) fulfills this mission through the use of a technique called "triage". Triage is a system by which patients are assessed and prioritized for treatment. In this system patients are NOT seen on the "first come, first served" basis. Rather, those with the most serious, or life threatening conditions are seen first.

For much of the community it serves, the ER is the hospital department patients first encounter. For many, it is the only hospital department they experience. The quality of care and customer service exemplified by the ER determines much of the public perception of the quality and service of the entire hospital.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this rotation the student should be able to:

- Explain what an Emergency Room is and its role in the delivery of health care.
- Describe a base station and explain its' purpose.
- Name some of the equipment used in the Emergency Room.
- Define and give the purpose of an electrocardiogram.
- Explain what a defibrillator is and its' purpose.
- Explain the need for adherence to the principles of standard precautions.

During this rotation the student will observe:

- Equipment used within an Emergency Room Department.
- Patient care provided by EMT's and Paramedics prior to arrival at the Emergency Room.
- The different types of sutures.
- The use of medical terminology.

During this rotation the student will have an opportunity to ask questions about:

- Job responsibilities and educational requirements for Emergency Room staff.
- Emergency treatments in contrast to in hospital treatment of injuries and diseases.
- Use of Medical Terms and abbreviations and the importance of accurate communications.

Emergency Room Sample Student Questionnaire

Student Name

Department Supervisor

Date

1. What are the three main responsibilities for the Emergency Room (ER) Department?

The three main responsibilities for ill and/or injured people in the Emergency Room Department are:

- *Assessment*
- *Diagnosis*
- *Treatment*

2. Some ER's have the function of serving as a "base station". What is a base station?

A "Base Station" is an Emergency Room Department that answers ambulance calls and gives paramedics orders to treat patients prior to arrival at the hospital.

3. Describe the qualifications needed to serve as a base station Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN).

The qualifications to serve as a base station Mobile Intensive Care Nurse are:

- *An RN with six months experience in ER.*
- *Basic CPR certification.*
- *Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification.*
- *Six week course to become a MICN (Mobile Intensive Care Nurse).*

4. What is a Myocardial Infarction? Why would the ER treat these?

A Myocardial Infarction is known as a heart attack. It occurs when a clot suddenly and completely blocks a diseased coronary artery, resulting in the death of the heart muscle cells supplied by that artery. It is treated because it is a life threatening problem.

5. What is an electrocardiogram (ECG)? Who orders an ECG? What is the purpose of a 12-Lead ECG?

An ECG is tracing of electrical activity of the heart. Physicians are responsible for ordering the test. The purpose is to diagnose the possibility of myocardial infarction or a cardiac arrhythmia injury and or abnormalities of the heart.

6. What is a defibrillator? What does it do?

A defibrillator is a machine that delivers an electrical shock, at a pre-set voltage, to the heart through the chest wall. It is used to restore normal rate and rhythm to a heart that has irregular electrical activity.

7. What is Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)? What are the protocols for CPR for infants? Children? Adults?

CPR is a first aid procedure that allows a person to externally support the circulation and breathing of a patient experiencing cardiac and/or respiratory arrest. This is done by compressing a patients chest so as to move blood through the heart. Respiratory support may be supplied by forcing exhaled air from the care giver into the lungs of the patient.

The protocols are as follows:

- *Infant: Compressions per minute are at least 100.
Compression-ventilation ratio is 5:1.*
- *Child: Compressions per minute are 80-100.
Compression-ventilation ratio is 5:1.*
- *Adult: Compressions per minute are 80-100.
Compression-ventilation ratio is 15:2 or 5:1.*

8. Give, in your own words, an account of the transfer of care between an ambulance crew and hospital staff. Include in this account:
- The patient's initial problem.
 - The condition in which the patient was found by the ambulance crew.
 - The type of assessment done by the ambulance crew upon arrival at the scene of the patient.
 - How the patient's condition and history was transmitted to the hospital staff by the ambulance crew.
 - What kind of information was included in the ambulance crew report to the hospital staff.

Answers may vary, depending on the experience of each student that rotate through the department.

9. Define the following terms:
- *Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA): A blood clot that forms through a narrowed vessel in the brain, causing a sudden and complete stoppage of blood flow. It is also known as a stroke.*
 - *Hypertension: High blood pressure*
 - *Hypotension: Low blood pressure*
 - *Hyperpyrexia: Fever*
 - *Syncopal Episode: Loss of consciousness*

10. List four pieces of equipment used in the ER, give the function of each.

Answers may vary.

- *Cardiac Monitor - the function is to give continuous tracings of the heart's electrical activity.*
- *ECG Machine - the function is to give twelve view recording of the electrical activity of the heart.*
- *ACCU-Check - the function is to give a quick check of a person's blood sugar level.*
- *Ophthalmoscope - the function is for checking inside the eye.*

11. What is a suture? What are the different types of suture and why are the differences significant?

Suture is a thread used to sew incisions closed. There are internal (Vicryl or Plain) and external (Dexon or Silk). Internal sutures are used for deep incisions and dissolve overtime. External sutures are used for external incisions and do not dissolve and must be removed in 5-10 days after placed.

12. What is Activated Charcoal? Why would someone be treated by having them swallow charcoal suspension?

Activated charcoal is given to overdose patients. It takes up the ingested substance in the lumen of the gut, and acts as a laxative to expel the gut contents to prevent blood absorption from the GI tract.

13. In terms of "Standard Precautions" what are the steps that ER personnel routinely take to protect themselves from communicable disease? Why is this particularly important in an ER?

ER personnel wear latex gloves to protect themselves from communicable diseases. Mask and gown are worn as needed. These steps are taken because the ER personnel are exposed to blood and body fluids.

14. Give the job responsibilities and educational requirements for each of the following workers within the Emergency Room Department:

Registered Nurse: The job responsibilities include patient care throughout the patient's stay in the hospital. The educational requirement is graduation from an accredited school of nursing. Registered Nursing programs require two years of college for a certificate and four years of college for a Baccalaureate degree.

Licensed Practical Nurse: The job responsibilities include the carrying out of the directions of a physician and RN in delivering patient care. The educational requirement is a graduate of an LPN program as determined by state regulations.

Respiratory Therapist: The job responsibilities include providing respiratory treatments, monitoring respiratory function, and the care and maintenance of the respiratory therapy equipment. Educational tracks include attendance at a community college and completion of a two year program in Respiratory Therapy. This type of program focuses on the technical aspects of Respiratory Therapy care delivery. The other educational option is to attend a University and complete a four year program, receiving a Bachelor of Science Degree in Respiratory Therapy.

Emergency Room Technician: The job responsibilities include stocking rooms, transporting patients, assisting with procedures for nurses and physicians, and ordering supplies. The educational requirements include a high school diploma. A graduate from an EMT program is desirable.

Unit Secretary: The job responsibilities include transcribing physician's orders to computer, answering phones, and miscellaneous clerical duties. The educational requirement is a high school diploma.

15. What high school courses should you take if you want to work in the Emergency Room Department?

The high school courses a person should take if they want to work in the Emergency Room Department are Anatomy and Physiology, General Biology, Microbiology, Chemistry, Physics, Math and related health courses. Answers may vary.

16. If you have taken one of the courses listed above, give one example of how something you learned in the class was used in the Emergency Room

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 - Hypotension:
 - Hyperpyrexia:
 - Syncopal Episode:
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 - Licensed Practical Nurse:
 - Respiratory Therapist:
 - Emergency Room Technician:
 - Unit Secretary:
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