



B5: Dealing with negative comments in the workplace

Type of Exercise: classroom/workshop activity

Level: basic

Length of time: 30-60 minutes

Resources needed: hand-out with scenarios

Instructions: Assign participants to small groups, and give each group a different scenario to discuss. They should be instructed to come up with at least two responses the charge nurse could have to each employee comment or behavior. Have them present their scenario, and their proposed responses to the larger group.

Scenarios:

- You are the charge nurse for your unit. How would you respond to the following comment made in report by a staff member, Gloria: "Oh, it was so gross, I went into her room and she was kissing that woman who visits everyday... it was so disgusting. I can't believe I had to see that. I just don't think I can take care of her...I mean she has to have a bath today, I won't touch her." How would you respond?
- You are the charge nurse for your unit. A nurse, Lori says, "I should not be expected to call Dionne Jones [a patient who is a female-to-male transgender individual] Don. She was born a woman, and god knows, she still has a woman's body. It's not right to expect us to call her, "he." How would you respond?
- You are the charge nurse for your unit. Jeff, a nursing assistant, requests during report to take care of a gay man who is on the unit recovering from a heart attack. Another staff member, Gail, says, "So are you a queer-lover now?" Jeff turns red and does not say anything. How would you respond?
- You are the charge nurse for your unit. Tatiana, the nurse in charge of the last shift seems bewildered and says, "That Mrs. Lee in Room 412 has a husband. He comes to see her everyday and they seem close. But yesterday, Mrs. Lee told me that she is bisexual. How can she be bisexual and have a husband?" How would you respond?



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- You are the charge nurse for your unit. You have a new employee, Carlos, who tells you that he is gay, and asks for your advice about how he should come out to the other staff members. How would you respond?
- You are the charge nurse for your unit. A student nurse, Nan, is having a discussion with two staff nurses as you enter the room. She has just told them that she is "queer." One of the staff nurses says "That term is too derogatory. How can you call yourself that? It's offensive." The other staff nurse turns to you and says, "Don't you agree?" How would you respond?
- You are the charge nurse for your unit. Margery, an outspoken fundamentalist Christian was observed giving a pamphlet to a gay patient about denouncing his sins and curing his homosexuality. When you ask her about it, she says, "You cannot discriminate against me because of my religious beliefs." How would you respond?



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