



## **Brief**

# **Occupational Safety and Health in Healthcare Competition For Third and Fourth Year Nursing Undergraduates 2012 / 2013**

**Issued on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

**Deadline for Submissions: 5pm, Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013**

Submissions should be sent to [healthcarecomp@hsa.ie](mailto:healthcarecomp@hsa.ie) in electronic format only, (max 10MB)

## **1.0 Introduction**

All nursing professionals need to have a sound understanding of occupational health and safety and be able to apply this knowledge in their everyday work activities. It is particularly important that those managing and supervising work activities ensure that staff can and do work safely and that they recognise and promote safe work practices and intervene as appropriate.

In the caring professions, the focus is on a patient-centred approach when providing care. However, in doing so it is important to recognise that the safety, health and welfare of the staff that care for patients is equally important. A safe working environment facilitates nursing professionals to provide optimum care and benefits both patient and carer.

For the purpose of this competition, a team of three will take on the role of nurse manager and work together to fulfil the project brief.

We hope you enjoy the challenge we have set out for your team.

## **2.0 Scenario**

A patient is in the Emergency Department and is to be admitted to your ward. She has a fractured femur. She has become increasingly less mobile over the past year due to her weight; she weighs 28 stone and does not leave the house. At home she lives in a downstairs bedroom but fell when walking, using a zimmer frame, to the downstairs bathroom. The patient states she is reasonably healthy, despite being diagnosed with hepatitis C some years ago, but she appears neglected and nutrition is poor. While her skin is in reasonably good condition, her general hygiene is very poor. Her carer is her husband, who is next of kin, but who appears intoxicated and is abusive (verbally and on one occasion he pushed a nurse since coming into the Emergency Department with his wife). The patient states that her husband drinks a lot, but that he cares for her as best as he can. However, he particularly drinks when stressed or challenged and can be quite abusive when he is worried or does not understand what is going on. The patient will require surgery and will be in hospital for some weeks.

You are the nurse in charge of the ward where this patient is to be admitted. Your ward is located on the first floor of the hospital and is accessible by lift. Each room on your ward can accommodate up to six patients. There is a bathroom (with showers and a bath) and toilets for each room. They are located across the corridor directly opposite the entrance to each room. Each room has a ceiling tracked hoist but this does not extend to the bathrooms. The bathrooms have a wall mounted toilet. There are two unoccupied beds on your ward.

### **3.0 Brief**

Your brief is to plan for the health and safety of the patient and the staff who come in contact with her, during her stay on your ward. Please make reasonable assumptions when undertaking the tasks.

#### **3.1 Task 1 (Maximum 1300 words)**

**(i)**

Identify and list as bullet points, what issues in relation to the hospital environment need to be considered prior to admitting and transferring this patient to the ward. (20 Marks)

**(ii)**

Using the nursing process, carry out and document an assessment of nursing needs for this patient. This will allow you to identify the nursing activities that need to be planned in order to provide quality nursing care for her. In addition, identify and list as bullet points the relevant care plans that will be required. (20 Marks)

#### **3.2 Task 2 (Maximum 2000 words)**

**(i)**

Identify the specific occupational health and safety hazards and the associated risks that any staff may encounter during her stay on your ward. (20 Marks)

**(ii)**

Identify the measures you would take to avoid or minimise the risks you have identified. Also describe any actions you would take to ensure that staff are familiar with the measures that you have identified. (20 Marks)

#### **3.3 Task 3**

Devise and present a checklist, which nursing staff can use in the future, to address the key points to be considered when preparing for the admission of a similar patient to a ward.

The checklist should:

- be user friendly
- be presented on a single A3 poster
- be suitable, practical and capable of being used for everyday use
- address the work environment
- ensure the safety and dignity of the patient
- provide for the health and safety of the staff, and
- contain a maximum of 600 words. (20 Marks)

#### **4.0 Resources**

- The Health and Safety Authority's website at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)
- Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) at [www.iosh.co.uk](http://www.iosh.co.uk) (Irish branch)

- Occupational health and safety professionals and manual handling advisers working within the hospital may also be a valuable resource.

This is not an exhaustive list and you can use other information sources and agencies.