

15th November 2011

Mental Health Module

October 2010 Intake (Course 23)

Title: Management of the “Difficult Patient”

Date of Submission – 15th April 2012

Feeling angry, frustrated or guilty is an experience common to all nurses. These emotions are very often provoked by patients labelled “difficult”. By using these terms we tend to inadequately describe the patient besides exposing our judgmental attitude. The emotions generated in “difficult patients” may be the consequence of the interaction between patients, carers and the healthcare system.

An important step in solving the problem of a “difficult” patient is identifying why the patient is being “difficult”. There may be various reasons for this to occur, including unrealistic expectations, psychiatric problems, dementia, anxiety or the patient being downright obnoxious besides others. Nurses can employ various skills and techniques to help overcome these difficulties.

With reference to literature and what was covered in your Mental Health Module, discuss the management of a “difficult patient”.

Length – 1500 to 2500 words

Double line spacing is to be used throughout.

Creativity, proof of correspondence or contact and use of on-line services will be acknowledged and rewarded.

Late submissions will receive at least a lower grade mark.