

Nathali Ceballos

New York City College of Technology

Dr. Margaret Rafferty

Community Health Nursing

Self-Reflection

December 1, 2018

My experience at the Stein Senior Center has been fun and educational. Working alongside senior citizens is not new for me, as I previously worked as recreational assistant in a Brooklyn nursing home. Nevertheless, I enjoyed every time I interacted with the residents, as I am fond of older adults and very interested in adult-gerontology nursing.

- 1) As per policy, I wore professional attire and was always prepared with the proper equipment, such as blood pressure cuff, stethoscope, pen, notepad and ID. I attended clinical punctually, completed assignments within time frames and actively participated in group meetings.
- 2) In the Stein Senior Center, we were not allowed to administer medications. However, I always ensured patient safety, practiced cultural sensitivity and maintained client confidentiality. We were in charge obtaining everyone's blood pressure and of informing our professor of any abnormalities. We also assessed the client's physical, psychological and emotional needs.
- 3) I practiced clear and effective therapeutic communication. I learned firsthand that older adults have a short attention span. The best way to educate and really engage them is by presenting information within a small group, sitting at eye level and making the learning process short and fun.
- 4) We developed a teaching plan according to the data we collected during the windshield survey and by what the client's identified as an increasing problem for them. The problem being lack of knowledge about food and proper nutrition.
- 5) We used PowerPoint slides to present information and used data found on internet, city websites and research articles.
- 6) I believe I showed a commitment to professional nursing development as I was able to receive feedback and constructive criticism from peers. After the NYSIM, we watched the "disaster" videos and analyzed the scenario. It was a great way to self-evaluate myself and recognize areas I failed and excel in.
- 7) I complied with the Stein Senior Center's mission and standards of practice. One of its mission statements focused on everyone feeling included and creating a safe, judgment free environment. This was reinforced with an activity that I participated in called *pintando y chateando*; "painting and chatting". During this gathering, Hispanic seniors found pleasure in painting while sharing personal stories and explaining the meaning behind their artwork. I personally enjoyed hearing the nostalgic and entertaining stories of the residents.
- 8) I guided clients to make appropriate lifestyle choices and identified healthcare resources for them. As per our nursing community class, we as a clinical group gave informative health presentations to the residents. My particular group focused on the importance of staying hydrated and eating nutritious food to prevent hypertension. We engaged with the residents by offering water bottles, tangerines and apples as incentives for participating. Special attention was given to providing primary and secondary preventive care, because knowledge is power and this power could potentially influence health choices and decisions. Furthermore, we also took blood pressures, help serve lunch and offered coffee. My other favorite activity was dancing with the seniors, as they enjoy warming up before lunch with upbeat songs from the 70's and 80's.

- 9) I began to identify solutions to complex problems the elderly encounter, such as difficulty in doing activities of daily living, lacking access to nutritious foods and unmanaged healthcare. We assisted them by assessing their unique needs and providing the appropriate resources. As a health care professional, I truly believe programs like in the Stein Senior Center provide various benefits to those seniors that attend. Senior centers/adult day centers provide opportunities for physical activity and socialization, while serving nutritious hot meals. Recreational activities don't only keep the seniors stimulated and engaged, but also allows them to contribute to their communities, develop and apply their skills, which may decrease levels of depression and loneliness. It gives me a satisfying feeling to know that I am giving these residents access to health information, education and health services and improving their overall quality of life by fulfilling psychological, mental, spiritual, emotional, physical and social needs.