Dialogue 1: Post-operative Focus of Care

(Student nurse Barbara turns in her clinical paper work and patient care plan to her instructor, Mrs. Baker, for review. Mrs. Baker asks questions regarding the plan of care.)

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________

Mrs. Baker: All right.

(Mrs. Baker reads the care plan.)

Mrs. Baker: When did the patient have the surgery?

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________

Mrs. Baker: He is a fresh post-operative patient. It’s a very good case for you to learn post-operative care.

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________

Mrs. Baker: What kind of procedure did he have?

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________

Mrs. Baker: I know, but was it open or laparoscopic?

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________

Mrs. Baker: You should indicate the procedure in your care plan because the care would not be the same when the procedure is difficult.

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________

Mrs. Baker: Tell me what you focus of care would be.

Student nurse Barbara: ________________________
Mrs. Baker: A little bit more detailed?

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: Good.

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: OK. If the vitals are not within the normal limit, what do you do?

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: All right, you also need to initiate some nursing care to help the patient.

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: Another very important post-operative nursing care activity is to help the patient cough effectively.

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: Why do we encourage coughing after surgery?

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: Right, coughing will help expand the lungs and clear the airway. It’s an evidence-based practice that significantly reduces post-operative pneumonia.

Student nurse Barbara: _________________________

Mrs. Baker: All right.
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(Student nurse Barbara turns in her clinical paper work and patient care plan to her instructor, Mrs. Baker, for review. Mrs. Baker asks questions regarding the plan of care.)

Student nurse Barbara: Mrs. Baker, I will be taking care of the patient in Room 322 Bed 2. Here is the care plan.

Mrs. Baker:

(Mrs. Baker reads the care plan.)

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: He was sent to the OR early in the morning and had a cholecystectomy. He came back to the floor at about 12 Pm.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Yes.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Cholecystectomy.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Oh, sorry. He had an open cholecystectomy.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Yes, thank you.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Pain, incision care, vital signs, circulation and perfusion…
Student nurse Barbara: Like all post-operative patients, the patient will be in pain. Right now he has PCA running morphine. The PCA is expected to be replaced by PRN IV push or PO pills by tomorrow morning.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: I will check vital signs every 30 minutes for two hours, then every one hour for four hours, then every four hours two times. This is the routine for all post-operative patient care.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Recheck the patient first. If it is confirmed the vital signs are not within the normal limit, I will call the doctor. For example, if the temperature is above 100 degrees, I will call.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Right, such as checking the incisions, monitoring the labs, giving PRN meds, putting an ice pack…

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Yes. I forgot to put that in my care plan. I will do patient teaching on how to use the incentive spirometer.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: To reduce the chances of getting pneumonia, which is one of the most common complications of surgery.

Mrs. Baker:

Student nurse Barbara: Yes, I should have put it in the plan. I’ll fix the care plan and turn it in to you a little bit later. Is that all right?