**Communicating with the Health Care Team Scenario**

Trevor is a Health Care Assistant student. He is completing his first week of clinical rotation in a long-term care facility under the supervision of instructor Sylvia Martin.

Today, Trevor will be caring for Mrs. Simon, age 70, with middle-stage dementia, and whose wife died last year. Trevor will report any client issues or changes in condition to Paulina, the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) on his unit.

**Act 1**

*Nurses’ station. Paulina, the Licensed Practical Nurse, is seated at the station. Trevor approaches the station.*

Trevor: Good morning, Paulina. I am Trevor. I’m the Health Care Assistant student for today. I have been assigned to care for a Mrs. Simon.

Paulina: Hi, Trevor. I haven’t been on shift for a few days, so I’m not so sure of Mrs. Simon’s status. I need to listen to morning report, but you don’t have to. I’ll fill you in later. Can you just go ahead and check on Mrs. Simon and see how she is doing, please?

**Question: What should Trevor do next?**

a) Go into Mrs. Simon’s room and see how she is doing. (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Not knowing anything about Mrs. Simon’s condition before going into the room may put both Mrs. Simon and Trevor at risk for injury.

b) Check Mrs. Simon’s chart to see the latest written report on her condition and then go check on her. (**Incorrect**. Feedback: It is important to check the latest written report on the client’s condition, but more is required.)

c) Explain calmly to Paulina that he is required to listen to the entire morning report for safety and appropriate client care. (**Correct.** Feedback: Check mark)

d) Go ask his instructor what to do. (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Trevor should communicate with Paulina first before seeking help from his instructor.)

**Act 2**:

*Trevor and Paulina are talking as they walk in the hallway.*

Trevor: Thanks for morning report Paulina. It was very helpful. I’m going to check on Mrs. Simon now.

Paulina: That’s great, Trevor.

*Trevor walks down hallway. Stops at door of Mrs. Simon’s room. Knocks, receives permission to enter, and then goes in. Mrs. Simon is seated in a chair.*

Trevor: Good morning Mrs. Simon. I am Trevor and I’ll be your Health Care Assistant student for today to take care of you.

Mrs. Simon: Who are you?

Trevor: I am Trevor. I will be looking after you today.

Mrs. Simon: Oh, that’s nice.

Trevor: How did you sleep last night?

Mrs. Simon: It was OK. I’m waiting for my wife to come and take me home.

Trevor: You must miss your wife.

Mrs. Simon: I do. (Pause). She is coming to get me today. (Pause) Could you pass me my water glass please?

Trevor: Of course.

*Mrs. Simon wipes her forehead. Trevor passes her a bottle of water.*

Trevor: Here you go. (Pause). You looked flushed. Is it OK if I feel your forehead?

Mrs. Simon: Yes. Who are you?

Trevor: I am Trevor, the Health Care Assistant student. (He touches her forehead gently with his wrist). You feel a bit hot. I am going to report back to the nurse how you are feeling, okay?

Mrs. Simon: OK.

**Question: What should Trevor report to Paulina?**

1. Mrs. Simon’s face was flushed this morning, and he thinks she has the flu. (**Incorrect.** Feedback: It is not within the role of the Health Care Assistant student to diagnose clients.
2. Mrs. Simon was confused and didn’t recognize him. (**Incorrect.** Feedback: It is common for clients who have dementia not to recognize their Health Care Assistant due to short-term memory loss. This is not a change in Mrs. Simon’s condition.
3. Mrs. Simon’s face was flushed, and she said she was thirsty. She was wiping her forehead and her skin felt hot when he touched it. (**Correct.** Feedback: Check mark)
4. Mrs. Simon insisted her wife is coming to take her home. She was thirsty and asked for water. (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Trevor has not reported some important information about what he saw, felt, and heard the client say.)

**Act 3**

*Trevor leaves Mrs. Simon’s room and heads to a hamper in the hallway. As he is doing that, Sylvia, the clinical instructor, walks toward him.*

Sylvia: Hi Trevor.

Trevor: Hi Sylvia.

Sylvia: How has your morning been?

Trevor: It was good.

Sylvia: I apologize. I was very busy with the other students. Do you have a moment to update me on your residents?

Trevor: Of course.

Sylvia: Awesome. Let’s go to a quiet room.

*They walk into a quiet room.*

Trevor: My clients are all good, but I just wanted to give you an update on Mrs. Simon. She was hot and flushed and her forehead was warm to the touch. She was thirsty as well. She kept asking for water.

Sylvia: What did the nurse say?

Trevor: Paulina took her temperature, and it was 38.5 C. She said to just to keep her in bed for breakfast. So, I did that. I helped her with her A.M. care, and she did not have a bowel movement today and she is on day 2. And she was voiding a lot today while I was with her, and her urine had a very strong odour to it. So, I was wondering if I should let Paulina know this as well?

Sylvia: Absolutely. Please go and update Paulina.

**Question: Which of the following would be the most appropriate report from Trevor to the nurse, Paulina?**

1. “Paulina, Mrs. Simon has had a.m. care and is on day 2 with no bowel movement.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: It is Trevor’s responsibility to prioritize the information that he is reporting; a.m. care and day 2 without a bowel movement are not priorities and do not need to be reported to the nurse.)
2. “Paulina, Mrs. Simon has been up constantly this morning to void.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: The nurse needs more details such as how often was Mrs. Simon up to void and anything unusual that Trevor noticed.)
3. “Paulina, Mrs. Simon has a urinary tract infection. She is voiding frequently and there is a bad odour.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: As a Health Care Assistant student, Trevor’s role is not to diagnose his clients, but to report exactly and objectively what he sees, hears, and smells.)
4. “Paulina, Mrs. Simon has been up to the toilet to void small amounts three times during the last hour. I noticed that her urine has a very strong odour.” (**Correct.** Feedback: Check mark.)

**Act 4**

*Trevor is bringing a tray of food into Mrs. Simon’s room. The tray includes a plate with scrambled eggs, a piece of bread or toast, a glass of juice, a spoon, and a cup of coffee. Mrs. Simon is seated in her bed.*

Trevor: Hi, I’ve got your breakfast for you.

*Trevor sets the tray on a table and brings it close to Mrs. Simon.*

Trevor (moving table): I’m just going to slide it over.

Trevor (placing a bib over Mrs. Simon’s head): I’m just going to put this on you to keep you clean and fresh.

Mrs. Simon: Thank you

*She makes a half-hearted attempt to pick up a spoon and to eat.*

Mrs. Simon: I’m tired.

Trevor: Would you like a hand with that?

Mrs. Simon: Yes, I am tired today.

*Trevor starts moving a chair over to sit next to Mrs. Simon. As he does that, nurse Paulina rushes in and quickly empties a small amount of some white powder onto the eggs.*

Trevor: What was that?

Paulina: Just her medication. It is just her Ativan to keep her calm. So make sure you give everything to her. She loves eggs!

**Question: What should Trevor do?**

1. Raise his voice and say, “You can’t order me to give her this medication.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: This is an aggressive response and should never be used when communicating within the health care team.)
2. Calmly explain to the nurse that he is only able to assist with medications when under the direct supervision of his clinical instructor. (**Correct.** Feedback: Check mark.)
3. Go ahead and give Mrs. Simon the medication. She is the nurse, and he is just a student who doesn’t want to get into trouble. (**Incorrect**. Feedback: The BC Care Aide and Community Health Worker Registry Guideline for medication delivery states … “students should only be allowed to assist with medication delivery during clinical placements where they are under the direct supervision of a fully qualified HCA Clinical Instructor designated by the educational institution.”)
4. Leave Mrs. Simon sitting up in her bed with her breakfast in front of her and go look for his clinical instructor to ask for directions on what to do. (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Trevor needs to inform his instructor, but it would be better if first he spoke to the nurse in an assertive manner to solve the dilemma immediately. As well, before leaving a client, Trevor should always ensure their safety.)

**Act 5**

*Trevor is arranging the finished breakfast dishes on the tray – empty plate, coffee cup, juice cup, empty plate.*

Trevor (Picking up tray): I’m just going to get this cleaned up for you, all right? ’ll be back shortly.

*Trevor leaves. Mrs. Simon gets out of bed, rubs her hands together, and starts pacing. She goes to the closet and starts taking clothes out from it. Trevor enters back into the room and watches as Mrs. Simon rubs her hands together, paces, and then takes out more clothes.*

Trevor: Mrs. Simon, what are you doing?

Mrs. Simon: I’m packing. My wife is coming for me. I have to be ready to go.

Trevor: You must miss her.

Mrs. Simon: I do! She was a beautiful person. She made me so happy.

Trevor: Is that a picture of her there? (Show framed photo on dresser.)

Mrs. Simon: Yes, it is. We travelled together a great deal. One year, we hit 20 countries. We used to learn the language so that we could talk to the people.

Trevor: Oh wow. Do you have any pictures of that?

Mrs. Simon: I do. They are over there. Would you like to see them?

Trevor: Yes, I would.

**Question: What would be valuable information for Trevor to report to the team from his interaction with Mrs. Simon?**

1. “Mrs. Simon was rubbing her hands, pacing, and pulling clothes out of her closet.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Trevor is reporting Mrs. Simon’s behaviour, but he is omitting some valuable information from his report.)
2. “Mrs. Simon was agitated and pacing. She wanted to pack her clothes to leave and see her wife. I found talking about the things she used to do with her wife, like traveling, helped her to settle. We looked at her photo albums and discussed her travels.” (**Correct.** Feedback: Check mark.)
3. “Mrs. Simon misses her wife, but she does not remember that her wife passed away last year.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Memory loss is common for a client with dementia and this report does not give any new or helpful information to the health care team.)
4. “Mrs. Simon was agitated. The closet should be locked up so she cannot access her clothes.” (**Incorrect.** Feedback: Agitated does not describe her specific behaviours. This report does not give helpful information to the health care team.)