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"IF YOU CANNOT DO GREAT THINGS, DO SMALL THINGS IN A GREAT WAY" - NAPOLEON HILL

## Can you tell me a little bit about your hospital and the units you cover?

I work in a freestanding children's hospital, level one pediatric trauma center. My hospital is a 228-bed facility that has an international reputation in pediatric medicine, surgery and research. The hospital was the first children's hospital in the state. My primary unit is the Emergency Department (ED) and after hours I cover our child life house pager (which covers the whole hospital). We recently opened a new critical care tour that houses our new ED and it was built with efficiency in mind with 52 ED treatment rooms, 4 Trauma Bays and 6 Behavioral Health rooms. We do have more overflow rooms if needed.

## What's your typical unit census and about how many patients do you see per day?

I feel working in the ED there may not be a typical day. I would say an average census would be 30 to 50 patients (including those who may be waiting in triage/checking in), at a constant. We may possibly see lower numbers if we have a lower house census and as it gets later into the night. My patient load may vary based on the acuity/visit reason of the patients that I work with for the day and what procedures they may have. I could see anywhere from 8 to 20+ patients a day.

## What does your average day look like?

I arrive to work at 1PM and check our departmental huddle notes through my email. I attend any child life departmental and committee meetings if it is on the schedule for the day. From there I look at my ED census and prioritize based on the acuity of patients and what needs they may have. After this I can make my game plan and get more information by communicating with the nurses and physicians on when their procedures will be taking place. I then am able to provide preparation, create a coping plan and provide procedural support. This is always the "best case" scenario, but I do have times where it is very busy and I may have to bounce around from pod-to trauma bay-to pod to provide fast preparations and implement coping and distraction techniques for the various procedures that may be occurring. We do chart in the patient's electronic medical record so I make sure that I am documenting my interventions after they happen. At the end of my shift I provide any follow-up for patients, if needed, to the unit child life specialists that they might work with (through secure email). I also place my daily patient stats/interventional stats in my selected departmental excel document at the end of my shift. Then my shift is done at 1AM.

## What is your favorite distraction item and how do you use it?

I love to use a good spectra light spinner. I am able to utilize it in so many ways!

## What's the best part about your job?

I love when patients accomplish goals and tasks that they and/or their family thought they would not be able to accomplish. They get so excited and are so proud of themselves! It is one of the most rewarding feelings, and also just seeing them implement the coping techniques that they practice with you beforehand.

## What's the hardest part in doing your job?

I think the hardest part in doing my job is that my days are never the same, but that is also why I love it so much! That is also why it is hard for me to give people a typical routine ;)

## What's a facet of your job that people wouldn't expect?

Somedays I have to be a great toy engineer/ mechanic. For example, the other day I had to fix a toy (that everyone loves so much) by opening it up, splicing a wire, and replacing that wire to make the electrical connection work again. I love it!

## What's something you wish you knew when you started on this unit?

I feel that this is a hard question for me. I did complete my internship where I am currently at and I felt that I had a great foundation to the unit when I started.

## Do you have anything else you'd like to share about your job, tips for students, or thoughts?

As a student, just remember to soak everything up and be able to reflect and create your own pathway for yourself throughout your child life journey.

