Final Reflection

The past 10 weeks of clinical placement at a long-term care center has been very educational, a good learning experience, difficult and rewarding. I got first hand experience with vital signs, basic care, feeding, bathing and dressing. By getting to experience a workplace setting and seeing how everything works is very beneficial and helpful when learning. I was able to get familiar with different procedures and more comfortable when preforming them. This term we learned how to take manual blood pressures using the two-step method, pulses, respiratory assessments, abdominal assessments and other tasks. It was helpful to do these assessments on the various residents because it helped to get a better understanding of what to do and how to do it.

The first few shifts of clinical rotation were very overwhelming and tiring. I went into this clinical placement not knowing what to expect. I now know it requires a lot of work and commitment to get everything finished. It was a bit nerve-wracking at first when trying to establish a relationship with the residents. The conversations felt a bit awkward and short ended as I kept running out of things to say or ask. After a few shifts it began to get easier to communicate with the residents and easier to talk with them. Communication was also a very big part of clinical. I constantly was communicating with the residents, staff and with my peers throughout the day to get support, help, advice and many other things throughout the day. It helped to have good communication as it made it easier to complete the tasks.

I enjoyed being on the morning rotation better than the evening because you got to do a lot more. You were in charge of getting your patient up, dressed, cared for and down to breakfast. You also would sometimes be instructed to help with bathes on certain days as well. The evening shift was god as well but would not get busy until later which left a lot of time trying to find things to help with or do. It was difficult when residents would not co-operate with you or not be in the best mood when you are trying to help them. It makes the situation a lot harder and usually takes it take a lot longer to complete. I feel comfortable now when working with the residents on my own. At first I was very overwhelmed and nervous that I would makes a mistake. After realizing I was capable of handling it myself, I got more confident in myself and was able to preform the task without any assistance. It feels good to feel confident in these tasks now as before clinical I did not feel very prepared.

The best experience of clinical for me was being able to establish a relationship with some of the residents and having them remember me from week to week. It always was able to make me smile when residents remembered me. I enjoyed each of their personalities and they were always able to make my day a little brighter. I also really enjoyed learning all the different assessments. I enjoyed being able to practice them on actual patients and seeing each of their different results. It was very beneficial to be able to practice on all types of patients to be able to get an idea of different types of blood pressures and pulses etc. The most difficult part of clinical was the firsts. Doing all of the different procedures such as peri-care, brief changes, toileting, bathing and dressing for the first time was very difficult and scary. I had background knowledge and practice from labs but not with actual residents, therefore this made it intimidating. Once I got all of the firsts over with, the rest of the time at clinical went very smoothly. I began to get comfortable and confident. It was also difficult when feeding a patient who could not themselves and trying to communicate with them throughout the feeding. It was hard because most of the residents who cannot feed themselves could not talk either. Therefore it was hard to determine when they wanted more food or drink or when they were finished.

I feel that my three strengths in nursing practice are that I am efficient, hard working and dedicated. I am efficient in all the tasks that I preform. I make sure that everything is done correctly and that the resident is comfortable. I am hard working as I always ask what else can be done when I am finished with my residents and always try to help out when I can. I am dedicated as I do my best to be the best that I can be each time that I am at placement. I work hard and listen and learn what I need to do to further my career in nursing. To improve myself through the next three years and my next clinical placements I need to always be focused on the task at hand and be focused only on clinical when at clinical. I also need to put more effort into my nursing assignments and papers for clinical, as it is a needed skill in nursing.