



STAT

newsletter

The Official Newsletter of
Nursing Students' Association
of New York State

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October 2021 Issue

FROM THE EDITOR:

Dear STAT Readers,

This issue of STAT is special in many ways. This is my first newsletter as STAT Editor and this will be the first issue of STAT since schools have fully returned to in-person classes since the Covid-19 pandemic. As we transition back to a sense of normalcy, we are reminded of how strong and resilient our student nurses are.

In this issue we discuss an important topic that often plagues many student nurses: nursing school burnout. This STAT issue will discuss nursing school burnout and healthy ways to prevent and cope this from happening. You will also see first hand accounts of our students experiences in the medical field and suggestions on how to excel as a nursing assistant. Additionally, we have provided resources surrounding the COVID-19 vaccine in efforts to educate our constituents with accurate and reliable information. Lastly, we feature a nurse specialty of ambulatory care nursing and what it's about and the requirements to be one.

I hope you enjoy this issue of STAT Newsletter and find inspiration to advance your nursing career, to get involved, and to take steps towards becoming the next nursing leader. Our newsletter consists of nursing students from all over New York and we thank you for showing interest in our articles.



Sincerely,

Rebecca Mei

STAT Editor
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HOW TO AVOID NURSING SCHOOL BURNOUT

by **Adriana Pereira, Manhattanville College**

Nursing students are filled with stress and anxiety whether it is worrying about exams, clinicals, being on time, and so on. There are many ways for nursing students to avoid burnout, but first it is important to recognize what burnout is. Burnout is defined by having “a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when you feel overwhelmed, emotionally drained, and unable to meet constant demands.” Nurse and nursing student burnout is real and it’s a problem. With the stress that healthcare and school brings, it is necessary to focus on our own mental health and well-being.

It may seem like a challenge and struggle to overcome certain obstacles in nursing school, but it is in our nature as future nurses to persevere and keep going. One of the best things to do to avoid burnout is through planning. When you receive the syllabi for your courses, write down the tasks you must accomplish on a weekly basis, enter your assignments and due dates in your planner, and print out the lecture materials. Initially, this may all seem daunting and unreasonable initially, but managing your time effectively takes a load off your shoulders. Figure out a study plan that works best for you. Try to plan when you are going to study for your courses based on when your next exams are.

One of the things nurses are best at is prioritizing, and as a nursing student you will realize that you have to prioritize your readings, studying time, time to do care plans and so forth. Scheduling time to do school work is not only going to help you become successful in nursing school, but also help to reduce burnout. Try not to procrastinate when it comes to doing assignments and studying. Instead, try to get ahead of the game and do your school work in advance if possible.



In high-stress situations it is important to recognize that you’re stressed and that you need to take a step back. Falling back on your support system is crucial in these moments.

Nursing students need to prioritize their mental health by taking some time away from school work. Gather with friends and family for a day to help get your mind off of nursing school. Make sure to regularly reach out to your loved ones, and connect with your friends in nursing school because they are the ones that know what you are truly going through.

Take advantage of therapeutic and counseling services at your school if they offer it. Have someone to talk to, even if you just want to vent to someone about how stressed or overwhelmed you are. Getting your feelings out will help tremendously and you will feel less stressed just by talking about it.

B, U, R, N, O, U, T,

Avoiding Burnout continued...



It is really important for nursing students to take time for self-care. We as nursing students need to help ourselves first before we help others. Without our own needs being met, how can we help others? It is extremely difficult to focus on ourselves when there is so much to do and so many expectations to be kept.

Taking a few minutes to an hour a day for self-care will make a big difference in how you feel. Getting at least eight hours of sleep a night, depending on your schedule, can also help improve concentration and alertness. Exercise is really effective when it comes to reducing stress levels. Take a thirty minute walk outside by yourself or with a friend, just to give yourself time to destress and recharge. There is nothing like sunlight and fresh air after a long day of lecture!

Nursing school is challenging and there is so much pressure to perform at a very high level. With so much course material to go through, you need to take a deep breath and focus on scheduling and planning what needs to be done. You need to make realistic goals. Don't forget your why because you started this journey for a reason. Remembering why you started can help you stay motivated.



TAKING THE LEAP AND GETTING INVOLVED

by Rebecca Mei, STAT Editor
Molloy College



Nursing school can be a scary and intimidating time. When you begin college, you are a mere eighteen years old and you are all alone. If you are lucky, you may know someone at the same school as you but if not, you are left in an unknown location with your future in your hands.

If you are anything like me, getting involved with extra curriculars is a scary concept that you were not sure if you were ready for. I have one thing to say to you: you are ready! Even if you think you are not, you are. The only way to advance your career is to get out of your comfort zone. There are a lot of reasons to say no, but often the benefits outweigh the risks.

"the only mistake you can make is not asking for help"
- Sandeep Fauhar

The best thing about getting involved is the tons of inspiring people that you will meet along the way. Before you know it, some of these people will be your close confidants and will encourage you to pursue paths that you previously had not seen or known about.

If you are nervous about joining a large organization such as NSANYS, start small with your state or local SNA and then make your way up once you feel more comfortable. Start by simply attending meetings and volunteer/community events.

If you are unsure on how to get involved, typically organizations provide the contact information of an individual who can help you. Use these resources to your advantage! In this age of social media, it makes it easy to find people that are involved with the organization or find the organization's social media. The best thing you can do for yourself is to seek assistance!

As a future nurse leader, it is imperative to get involved and acquire leadership skills that will shape you into the best nurse that you can be. Take a leap of faith and step out of your comfort zone! You will be grateful for it in the end.

DR'S OFFICE, LAUREN SPEAKING

by Lauren Lodico, Molloy College

I had never given much thought to working at a doctor's office before. This is mostly because I never thought I was qualified to due to my own insecurities. However, I started working at a psychiatric private practice office at the end of December and I have loved every minute of it. It is no small task due to my office filing and writing scripts for nine different providers. But I could have never asked for a better community of coworkers and better patients.

A typical day of work consists of about a half an hour drive to work and once I get to the office, I get logged in and situated. After I am done, I make the calls to confirm for tomorrow's appointments and typically, I only have to call five to six of the provider's patients because other providers only work on specific days. Once the calls are made and the patients are either confirmed or left messages, I start to make the last notes for the doctors. This only started becoming a task that we have to complete because the doctors are remote and do not have electronic access to the patient files. I usually only have to complete this for two or three of the providers and I make sure to make a pile of the charts in order so tomorrow's payments can be quick and smooth. The office does not take any insurance so we have a credit card on file for most of our patients.

There have been tough days where it's hard to put on a smile under my mask and come to work with a friendly tone. But as soon as I get to my office, I am surrounded by support and love, and know I can bury what I left outside of work and deal with what is in front of me. The biggest plus about working my job is that my boss is insanely flexible.



She knows I am a full-time student and that I have a busy schedule and is always an encouragement of my schoolwork. If there is ever a time where school is starting to collide, she will not hesitate to give me the day off or let me go early. If it was not for this extreme support, I do not think I would love my job as much as I do. Find a place you love, a community you love; do not settle. And hold onto them for as long as you can.



NURSING ASSISTANT TIPS

by Julianna Asaro, Treasurer of NSANYS
Molloy College

Starting a new job can be intimidating. During nursing school, many students may have the opportunity to work as nursing assistants without taking any outside certifications. I would like to add that some students may choose not to get a job in healthcare while in nursing school, which is totally okay as well! It is not required to have prior healthcare experience after graduating from nursing school and applying to be a Registered Nurse. However, if you do decide to become a nursing assistant, here are some tips when venturing into your new job:

TIPS:

WRITE IT DOWN

Carry a small notebook or clipboard with you to write down any important information about assignments or reminders about your patients. However, do not forget to properly discard the paper at the end of your shift following HIPPA laws.

READ, READ, READ

Read your patients care plans as soon as possible and coordinate patient care with anything that the nurse might need done, such as vital signs. Remember, prioritizing care is still a priority.

SPEAK OUT

Do not be afraid to ask the nurse if you have any questions, this is a great way to learn about your future role, so do not be shy. Do not be afraid to ask your co-workers for advice! They are there to assist you in learning and adjusting to your new role.

UTILIZE YOUR POCKETS

Keep important items in your pocket, such as pens, markers, bandage scissors, etc.

PROFESSIONALISM

Remember, you were hired as a nursing assistant. Do not mix up the roles and responsibilities of the nurse with that of a nursing assistant. Do not get caught up in any drama or conflicts in your unit. Be professional!

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Always protect your back by using proper body mechanics! Do not forget to eat well and drink plenty of fluids during your shift!

HEALTHCARE HERO

by Lauren Lodico, Molloy College



As soon as the vaccine came out, my dad was the first in line to receive it. Because I work in a doctor's office, I was eligible to receive it as well but waited. I was not sure why; I think I just didn't want to be the first one. When my dad was fully vaccinated with no symptoms in his reactions, I think my family took a leap and decided that my mother and I were going to get vaccinated as well.

I was proudly vaccinated on April 1st, with my mom and sister in the car waiting for me, and spent the day smiling because I took, "one small step step for man and one giant leap for mankind." I was sitting in a plastic chair in a shutdown racetrack, I knew that I would share this important moment with my kids one day.

However, I was not anticipating the side effects that I would experience the night I received the vaccine. I was hit with extreme body pain, a high fever, hot flashes, and severe chills that felt as if someone had numbed my toes. Though I knew that the vaccine would not give me COVID, I was worried that I had it.

I said my prayers and tried to sleep that night, but sleep was scarce because I felt like I could not catch

my breath, but this did not worry me much because normally, I have difficulty breathing. After finding out I had a fever, I took acetaminophen and continued to take it every 6 hours. My body was innately responding so severely, that I was horrified to receive the second dose of Pfizer 21 days later. Especially because everyone that I had known had said the second dose was worse for them.

But if I was going to get vaccinated, I was not going to quit. I was going to get all or nothing. I showed up by myself this time with courage in my lungs, hopefully some decent antibodies in my blood, and the day off tomorrow from work. The shot went in and I could almost feel fireworks go off in my head because I knew I was taking the step that needed to be taken. The world was going to be okay again because I was doing something about it by getting vaccinated.

It is still not okay; it might not be for a while. And I definitely was not okay after that shot, having the same innate immunity responses such as fever and insane soreness that I had not felt with any flu or cold ever before. But I knew that even if I could not administer vaccines or be on the frontlines yet in my schooling, I was doing my part as a healthcare hero.

NURSE SPECIALTY AMBULATORY CARE NURSING

by **Oluwaseye Koiki, Molloy College**

What is ambulatory care nursing?

These nurses treat patients in an outpatient environment with acute, chronic illnesses, routine care that does not require an overnight stay in a hospital. According to the American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nursing, "Professional ambulatory care nursing is a multiplex specialty that combines independent and collaborative practice." They provide high-quality care to individuals, families, communities across the lifetime. Ambulatory nurses treat patients with various medical conditions. Responsibilities of an ambulatory care nurse include developing nursing treatment plans, assisting in performing the diagnostic tests, administering medication, educating patients on their condition, monitor vital signs and pain control, establishing patient safety, and coordinating with other health professionals. To become an ambulatory care nurse, you will first have to obtain a bachelor of science in nursing or an associate degree in nursing, pass the NCLEX licensing exam and gain one to three years of experience in an acute care setting such as intensive care unit or postanesthesia care unit. To become a certified ambulatory care nurse You should:

- Have an active RN license
- Have at least two years of RN experience
- Have a minimum of 2,000 hours of clinical practice in ambulatory care within the last 3 years
- Have completed 30 hours of continuing education in ambulatory care nursing within the last 3 years

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MYTH VS FACT: COVID-19 VACCINE

by Rebecca Mei, 2021 STAT Editor
Molloy College

The world is currently divided amongst those for and against the Covid-19 vaccines. During this difficult and divisive time, it can be easy to find misinformation regarding the subject. As nursing students and nursing professionals, it is important to share evidence-based knowledge amongst our community and beyond. Let's take a look below at some popular myths regarding the Covid-19 vaccine and see how true they really are.

Myth: mRNA vaccines are not vaccines

Fact: mRNA vaccines, such as Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, work differently than other types of vaccines, but they still trigger an immune response inside your body. The mRNA vaccines do not contain any live virus. Instead, they work by teaching our cells to make a harmless piece of a "spike protein," which is found on the surface of the virus that causes Covid-19. After making the protein piece, cells display it on their surface. Our immune system then recognizes that it does not belong there and responds to get rid of it. When an immune response begins, antibodies are produced, creating the same response that happens in a natural infection.

Myth: All events reported to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) are caused by the vaccine

Fact: VAERS data alone cannot determine if the reported adverse event was caused by a Covid-19 vaccination. Anyone can report events to VAERS, even if it is not clear whether a vaccine caused the problem. Some VAERS reports may contain information that is incomplete, inaccurate, coincidental, or unverifiable. These adverse events are studied by vaccine safety experts who look for unusually high numbers of health problems, or a pattern of problems, after people receive a particular vaccine.



Myth: Covid-19 vaccines alter your DNA

Fact: Covid-19 vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. Both mRNA and viral vector Covid-19 vaccines deliver instructions (genetic material) to our cells to start building protection against the virus that causes Covid-19. However, the material never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept.

Myth: The Covid-19 vaccine is not safe because it was rapidly developed and tested.

Fact: Many pharmaceutical companies invested significant resources into quickly developing a vaccine for Covid-19 because of the world-wide impact of the pandemic. The emergency situation warranted an emergency response but that does not mean that companies bypassed safety protocols or didn't perform adequate testing. The FDA has recently approved the Pfizer-Biontech vaccine.

Covid-19 Vaccine continued...

Myth: Covid-19 vaccines contain microchips.

Fact: Covid-19 vaccines do not contain microchips. Vaccines are developed to fight against disease and are not administered to track your movement. Vaccines work by stimulating your immune system to produce antibodies, exactly like it would if you were exposed to the disease. After getting vaccinated, you develop immunity to that disease, without having to get the disease first.

Myth: Covid-19 vaccine will cause you to test positive on a Covid-19 viral test.

Fact: None of the authorized and recommended Covid-19 vaccines cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection. If your body develops an immune response to vaccination, which is the goal, you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a previous infection and that you may have some level of protection against the virus.

Myth: The vaccine will cause infertility or miscarriage.

Fact: Covid-19 vaccination is recommended for everyone 12 years of age or older, including people who are trying to get pregnant now or might become pregnant in the future, as well as their partners. Currently no evidence shows that any vaccines, including Covid-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems (problems trying to get pregnant) in women or men.

Myth: You don't need to get the vaccine if you already had Covid-19 and recovered.

Fact: Getting Covid-19 might offer some natural protection or immunity from reinfection with the virus that causes Covid-19. But it's not clear how long this protection lasts. Because reinfection is possible and Covid-19 can cause severe medical complications, it's recommended that people who have already had Covid-19 get a Covid-19 vaccine.

Myth: The current Covid-19 vaccines don't protect against the Covid-19 variants.

Fact: In the U.S., the delta (B.1.617.2) variant is now the most common Covid-19 variant. It is nearly twice as contagious as earlier variants and might cause more severe illness. While research suggests that Covid-19 vaccines are slightly less effective against the variants, the vaccines still appear to provide protection against severe Covid-19.

Myth: The side effects of the Covid-19 vaccine are dangerous.

Fact: The Pfizer and Moderna Covid-19 vaccines can have side effects, but the vast majority are very short term — not serious or dangerous. The vaccine developers report that some people experience pain where they were injected; body aches; headaches or fever, lasting for a day or two. These are signs that the vaccine is working to stimulate your immune system.

Covid-19 Vaccine Hotline:

1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

Always know that the Nursing Students' Association of New York State (NSANYS) is here to help you! Do not hesitate to reach out and start the conversation!

Email: sec.nsanys@gmail.com

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- Topics: must be related to nursing or nursing education
- Length: minimum 300 words

Email your articles to:

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