Chapter 1

Reflective question 1
Think about someone in your family or a friend or neighbour who is living with a chronic healthcare condition. What impact does it have on their daily life? What help or support do they find helps them continue with day-to-day living?

Reflective question 2
A patient whose epilepsy is controlled with sodium valproate under trade name Epilim is admitted to your ward on a Sunday. The only stock available is sodium valproate (non-proprietary). What do you do?

Reflective question 3
If a patient develops heart failure, how will this affect the absorption of medicines for the control of diabetes or blood pressure? Once the heart failure has been treated and the oedema relieved, why is it important to check for the adverse effects of all prescribed medicines?

Reflective question 4
Which drugs will be eliminated more rapidly if carbamazepine is co-prescribed? Why is this drug interaction particularly important to women?

Reflective question 5
Are any of the drugs listed (carbamazepine, warfarin, amphetamines, some statins, most calcium-channel blockers, some antiviral agents, sildenafil and related drugs, zopiclone, benzodiazepines, pimozide, tacrolimus, ciclosporin, amiodarone, sertraline, buspirone, ergotamine (including LSD), some cytotoxics and ranolazine) prescribed in your clinical setting? What fruit juices are on the menu? Consider the suggestion that fruit juices and grapefruit should be removed from hospital menus.

Reflective question 6
Are there implications for urine testing?

Chapter 2

Reflective Exercises
Chapter 3

Reflective question 1
John is a 40-year-old man with ulcerative colitis who requires life-long parenteral nutrition. He enjoys swimming. He has to have a central venous access device inserted. What device do you think would be best for him to have? Why?

Reflective question 2
A patient in your care is receiving rehydration via a gravity-flow infusion. What specific precautions are required to ensure that fluids are administered safely and as prescribed?

Reflective question 3
What are the signs and symptoms of phlebitis, and how may the condition be prevented from developing?

Reflective question 4
What are the factors that increase the risk of infection with regard to a peripheral cannula? How may the risk be minimised?

Chapter 4

Reflective question 1
Discuss what actions need to be taken following screening for any patient found to be at risk of malnutrition? Consider who is responsible for implementing these actions. What are the implications if no one takes responsibility for implementing an action plan following screening?

Reflective question 2
Using a patient you have cared for, as an example, consider how malnutrition could have affected:
- The condition of their skin
- Their recovery from illness
- Their stay in hospital
- Their ability to live independently in the community following discharge.

Reflective question 3
Consider the factors that may influence a patient’s nutritional intake in hospital? Using a patient that you have cared for, reflect on how you could have reduced the impact of the factors you have listed upon their care. What measures can be put in place at a ward level to improve a patient’s nutritional intake? Think about common initiatives that could be implemented, and how effective they may be in your area of practice.
Reflective question 4

Using your experience, think about a patient who was at risk of malnutrition. Were they nutritionally screened on admission? If not, how was the risk of malnutrition identified? Did they receive an appropriate level of care following screening? If not, how could their care have been improved? Could you have influenced that care? How would you change the care you provide if you were to care for a patient at risk of malnutrition in the future?

Chapter 5

Reflective question 1

How would you make the environment safe after a spillage of urine?

Reflective question 2

Identify five patient care items that have the single-use sign present on their packaging and check the expiry date on them.

Reflective question 3

What care bundles are used in the hospital where you are working? Find out who developed these ‘bundles’ and how they were implemented.

Chapter 6

Reflective question 1

With reference to the nurse’s professional role, what discharge advice should be provided to older patients regarding their medications?

Reflective question 2

Consider the accident and emergency department and ward settings, and compare and contrast the potential risks for falling that they pose for older patients.

Chapter 7

Reflective question 1

Reflect on a patient that you have cared for who was diagnosed with a life-limiting or terminal illness. What were their responses to the knowledge that the outcome of their illness would ultimately result in their death? How did this impact on the care they received?
Reflective question 2
What does dyspnoea mean to you? What are the common causes of dyspnoea that you have encountered when caring for patients? How have you addressed those problems?

Reflective question 3
Reflect on a time you cared for a patient who presented with a ‘death rattle’. What were your feelings? How did the multidisciplinary team attempt to address or manage the condition? What were family’s reactions to the death rattle?

Reflective question 4
How do you recognise that a patient who is dying is experiencing pain? How might you treat pain in a patient who is dying?

Reflective question 5
What do you consider to be the greatest challenges in communicating with individuals at the end of life?

Reflective question 6
From your clinical experience, have you observed families that have had similar experiences? How does your awareness of these changes impact on the care you provide to family members in the face of impending death?

Reflective question 7
What, in your opinion, are the benefits and burdens of continuing with nutrition and hydration in patients as they approach the end of life? Consider both the patient and the patient’s family.

Chapter 8

Reflective question 1
Think in terms of risk assessment – each element of anaesthetic preparation is born out of reducing a specific risk. Look again at the list in Table 8.1. In each case, what risks is the anaesthetic practitioner addressing?

Reflective question 2
What criteria are considered in the postoperative care of the patient?
Chapter 9

Reflective question 1
Consider the importance of the nurse’s role in assessing, recording and monitoring patients and in identifying any deterioration in terms of:
- Successful patient recovery
- Reducing the number of admissions to intensive care
- Reducing the number of days in hospital, and thereby reducing healthcare costs.

Reflective question 2
Now that you have read this Chapter and Chapter 1 (on the principles of nursing assessment), think about what you have learned and how this will influence your practice in relation to assessment, monitoring and reporting a sudden deterioration in a patient’s condition.

Chapter 10

Reflective question 1
What are the key nursing care priorities in managing a patient in the emergency department with suspected acute appendicitis?

Reflective question 2
What is the role of the emergency nurse within the multidisciplinary team in the assessment, management and definitive care of the patient with major trauma?

Reflective question 3
What are your feelings about resuscitating a patient when the family are present? How would you communicate with them?
Chapter 11

Reflective question 1

Jennifer, aged 22 years, has atopic eczema and asthma. Following a visit to the countryside, she is complaining of irritation and excoriation of her skin. What are the signs and symptoms of atopic eczema? What do you think exacerbated her condition? Think about why her skin is itchy and what interventions you could use to reduce the irritation.

Reflective question 2

Marie is a 32-year-old lady who has presented to the outpatient dermatology clinic complaining of scaly plaques on her knees, elbows and trunk. She appears withdrawn and is reluctant to change into a disposable gown. What are the signs and symptoms of psoriasis? What type of psoriasis do you think she has? What interventions and coping strategies could you use to help this lady manage her condition?

Reflective question 3

What are the factors that influence wound healing? List some measures you can implement to alleviate some of these problems.

Reflective question 4

Mr Hanson is an elderly gentleman who has been admitted with chronic obstructive airway disease. He has a grade 2 pressure ulcer on his sacrum and is incontinent of both urine and faeces. What are the risk factors that may have contributed to his pressure ulcer? Write a care plan for Mr Hanson to manage his skin integrity and prevent deterioration.

Chapter 12

Reflective question 1

Mr Smith was recently diagnosed with active tuberculosis. He is 44 and lives with his 80-year-old mother. His body mass index is 18 kg/m². He is dyspnoeic and has a productive cough. What do you need to consider in planning his nursing care? How would you promote the completion of his treatment?

Reflective question 2

Stephen has presented to college occupational health with difficulty breathing, increasing breathlessness and wheezing. He reports being less able to play football, with increasing episodes of breathlessness and wheezing. He has asthma and was prescribed a Ventolin inhaler that he rarely uses. He also reports night-time coughing and says that he has smoked more than normal over the last 3–4 months. How would you manage Stephen’s care? What steps could be taken to promote self-care? As an occupational health nurse, what advice would you offer Stephen?
Chapter 13

Reflective question 1
Joseph is a 65-year-old who has been admitted to your ward for a diagnostic cardiac catheter procedure. What would be your nursing care priorities?

Reflective question 2
Joan has been admitted to your ward for an aortic valve replacement. She has a diagnosis of aortic stenosis. What are the predisposing factors for this? What symptoms is she likely to experience?

Chapter 14

Reflective question 1
Consider the dietary advice that would be required by an individual newly diagnosed with alcohol-induced cirrhosis of the liver.

Reflective question 2
Ryan is a 19-year-old college student who had recently been diagnosed with irritable bowel disease. Describe the educational advice that he will require in relation to his condition, diet and lifestyle.

Chapter 15

Reflective question 1
List the signs and symptoms of transurethral resection syndrome. What would you do if your patient started to exhibit these symptoms?

Reflective question 2
Discuss the management of a patient with acute kidney injury.
Chapter 16

Reflective question 1
What symptoms would you expect people who suffer from hypothyroidism to exhibit, and why?

Reflective question 2
Given the consistent rise in the number of people diagnosed with diabetes, what implications do you think this has for the development and cost of healthcare services in the future?

Chapter 17

Reflective question 1
Review the way in which you involve families and carers when providing care to patients with a traumatic brain injury.

Reflective question 2
What resources are available within your organisation for families and carers to help them understand traumatic brain injury?

Reflective question 3
What measures to prevent future strokes would you teach patients?

Reflective question 4
What information would you provide patients with multiple sclerosis?

Reflective question 5
It is known that patients with Parkinson’s disease do not always take their medication at the required time. What strategies can be employed to improve compliance with medication administration and timing?
Chapter 18

Reflective question 1
You are a 25-year-old who had a heart transplant for cardiomyopathy 5 years ago. Many of the symptoms you had before your transplant are starting to return, and your consultant suggests that you are suffering from chronic organ rejection. From a psychological perspective, what are you feeling? Compare your responses to the problem posed in Reflective question 2.

Reflective question 2
Your sister is 30 years of age and has just been diagnosed with systemic lupus erythematosus. She is worried and asks you for more information on this disease and what effect it will have on her lifestyle. Compare your responses to the problem posed in Reflective question 1.

Chapter 19

Reflective question 1
What are the main considerations when planning to give a patient a blood transfusion?

Reflective question 2
Maureen is a patient in the haematology unit whom you are preparing to discharge following high-dose chemotherapy for leukaemia. List three main side-effects of chemotherapy and describe how you would educate Maureen regarding the prevention, recognition and management of these at home.

Chapter 20

Reflective question 1
Reflect upon alternative or additional conservative treatment options for a patient with osteoarthritis. Identify one or more health professionals and how each discipline might manage issues relating to patients' reduced mobility, weight increase, sleep reduction and increased pain.

Reflective question 2
Robert is 20 years old. While cycling home from college, he was hit by a car and sustained compound fractures of the shafts of his right tibia and fibula, as well as a closed transverse fracture of the shaft of his left radius. The leg injuries were treated by internal fixation and the arm injury was treated by a plaster cast. What information and advice about his injuries would you provide before Robert is discharged? Find out what information your local hospital fracture clinic or accident and emergency department gives to patients who receive a plaster cast.

Reflective question 3
List the factors that increase the risk of an older person falling. Identify which of these relate to an older person you know or are currently nursing. How can their risk of incurring further falls and a potential injury be reduced?
Chapter 21

Reflective question 1
Reflect on an episode from practice that involved caring for patients with hearing difficulties. What strategies did you use to communicate with your patients?

Reflective question 2
What support could you provide to patients with a nasal pack in place for epistaxis?

Chapter 22

Reflective question 1
Jean is 35, has been diagnosed with cervical cancer and needs to have a hysterectomy. What psychological care needs to be given, and what issues need to be addressed before the operation?

Reflective question 2
Thomas is a 50-year-old man with high blood pressure and diabetes. As an inpatient, he confides in you that he and his wife have not been able to have sexual intercourse for 2 years because he is unable to maintain an erection. What advice would you give him? What resources could you direct him to for more help and information?