**ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE/ REFERRAL/ DEATH OF VICTIM OF VIOLENCE**

While providing nursing acre in any medico-legal case, the forensic nurse must take care of the following things:

1. After receiving patient from the OPD to ward, immediately inform the doctor on duty of that unit.
2. All the records of patient like OPD slip, admission slip, and admission files must be kept under lock and key to prevent legal issues.
3. It is nurse’s responsibility not to show the patient’s records to anybody.
4. It is nurse’s responsibility not to shoe or hand over patient’s records to any police personnel.
5. It is also a nurse responsibility not to throw any discharge of patient without the permission of physician.
6. Nurse should keep the belongings of the patient in her custody.
7. Take consent of relative or patient for any kind of procedures or treatment.
8. Avoid answering enquiries of an insurance agent.
9. The condition of patient should be reported verbally to relatives.
10. Maintain all records of the patient accurately.

RESPONSIBILITY OF A NURSE DURING THE DISCHARGE OF PATIENT

1. On discharge, no record should be handed over to the police by nurse.
2. Ensure clearly, if patient is transferred to another ward or hospital.
3. Before allowing the patients to leave the hospital, nurse should clearly enter or write the name of relatives of the patient.
4. It is the nurse’s responsibility to keep all the records concerning to patients under lock and key after discharge of the patients.

IN CASE OF REFERRAL

1. Note the complete name and address of the patient.
2. Note identification number
3. Signature of witness
4. Note list of belongings of the patients.
5. Handing over the body of the person to mortuary/ police officer.

IN CASE OF DEATH

After death of the patient, the medico-legal nurse must get written instruction from the medical officer for handing over the body of the person to mortuary/ police officer.

1. Note the complete name and address of the patient
2. Note identification number
3. Signature of witness.
4. Note list of belongings of the patients.
5. Maintain privacy and give full respect to dead body.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A NURSE AS A WITNESS

A nurse may be called as witness regarding what happened in the clinical setting while caring for a patient and to describe what he or she saw when the patients entered the hospital and nay documentation related to the case. They can make a difference in the lives of patients by attending to the important aspects of a case when a patients presents in the health care settings with forensic issues. Since testifying is stressful, following are few tips which can help nurses prepare for testifying:

1. Read over all documents to which nurse will be testifying. This will refresh the memory.
2. Dress professionally and comfortably.
3. Be on time and prepared.
4. When answering questions on the stand, take time and answer only to what you know.
5. Listen carefully to the question and if you do not understand it, ask the lawyer to repeat the question or to clarify the question.
6. Make eye contact with the lawyer who is addressing you.
7. If you do not know any answer, just state that fact.
8. If nurse cannot remember something from the documents, ask to refer to the document. Do not make any guesses.
9. Do not become intimidated, if the opposing lawyer appears to be “badgering” you. It is not personal. He is just doing his job.
10. If an objection is raised, stop speaking and wait for the judge’s decision.
11. If you feel you cannot answer a question with a simple “yes” or “no” ask the judge if you can clarify your answer.
12. You are there to state the facts of what you observed, evidence collected, and what you documented. Nothing else.
13. Remain calm and composed throughout the testimony. Do not let the opposing counsel unnerve you. Take a deep breath when questioned and take your time answering.

Forensic nurse play a significant role in providing the holistic care to the victims, survivors, their families and caregivers and also to the perpetrators of crime. While providing care, they act as advocates for the victims and survivors taking care of their rights and respecting their autonomy. In addition to forensic nurses, they also play a role in conducting research to understand the epidemiology of crime and prevention services which help in the reduction of crime.