

Clinical Narrative Accounts That Illustrate Nursing Practice

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A clinical narrative should be a personal story of a recent clinical situation that may include one or more of the following type of situations:

- A situation in which you feel your intervention really made a difference in patient outcome either directly or indirectly (by helping other staff members).
- A situation that went that went unusually well.
- A situation in which there was a breakdown (i.e., things did not go as planned).
- A situation that is very ordinary and typical.
- A situation that you think captures the quintessence of what nursing is about.
- A situation that was particularly demanding.
- A situation that stands out in your memory for any reason.

In writing a clinical narrative, you should include:

- Context of the clinical situation (e.g., shift, time of day, staff resources, etc.)
- A detailed description of what happened
- Why the clinical situation is important to you
- What your concerns were at the time
- What you were thinking about as it was taking place
- What you were feeling during and after the situation
- What, if anything, you found most demanding
- Important conversations you had with the patient, family, members of the health care team or other relevant parties. (Here, recapturing actual dialogue is helpful.)

