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A Lesson Learned

by Cheryl Harrell

In life we all make mistakes. The important thing is that you learn from them. I've made mistakes all my life and just carried on like nothing happened or that it didn't matter, but there is one mistake I have made that taught me a lesson.

I will never forget it. It was when I was attending Southwest Technology Center in Altus for the Practical Nursing Program. It was during our clinical semester, and the class was learning how to pass medication. The rules were to check the medication order, the patient, the medication dose and the medication three times. I thought I had done it right. I checked it all three times, but I was so nervous due to the teacher staring me down, asking me what my steps were and what the medications were for that I did not realize that one of my medications were for 1800 hours. 1800 is 6:00 P.M., and my shift ended at 1400 or 2:00 P.M.

Although my mistake didn't hurt the patient, I still had to fill out an incident report. Any time a nurse makes an error in medication no matter how small it is, he/she must fill out a report. I felt so stupid, and I was embarrassed. Although I am not licensed yet, I still know to check my medication and my patient three times. I do it five times now just to be certain. I never want to make a medication error again because the next time could potentially harm my patient. One can NEVER be too careful or too SAFE in nursing.