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I am a registered nurse with an associate degree. I have mostly worked in a nursing home/rehab center since I graduated nine years ago and that's why I refer myself as a gerontological expert. I love my job working with the elderly patients.

The best thing about working with the elderly is the constant opportunity to learn and teach new things. The public may think that a geriatric nurse only follows the doctor's orders. We do various things which make this job interesting. We assess patient's condition, make critical decisions, provide life saving interventions, teach patients and families about caring for themselves, provide comfort and support, and remain with patients during some of the worst and the best moments of their lives. We also provide compassion and friendship to our patients.

The elderly have a wealth of lifetime experience which they are always sharing especially when laying bored in their beds. In addition, it is very rewarding to see the changes you can make to someone's experience while they are at the nursing home for rehab or long term care. Despite their moans and groans, most patients are grateful for what we do. It is for these reasons that I chose adult services as a career.

With the aging baby boomers, I believe the older adult services profession is an area with many new job opportunities in the future. Going back to school to get my BSN will open up my options within the field. I intend to gain more knowledge and skills to better my performance. The knowledge gained will also open up leadership opportunities within this field. I plan to use my education to empower others in my field including staff and patients. With my education, I will share my expertise in changing and developing new protocols to better serve our patients and residents.

Geriatric nursing is rewarding in various ways. I remember working with Name, who was a 97 year old resident at our facility. Name and I developed a special relationship. It all started off when one day she requested for a nurse to trim her toe nails and I happened to be the nurse on duty that day. I took my time and did a great job. I remember her saying that "you did an excellent job, just like my podiatrist would do. I feel like I just had a pedicure done with no money to pay you." Since that day, nobody else did Name's nails. She would sometimes wait for weeks for me to do her nails. This simple act of nail care left a positive impact on pearl and I felt good and appreciated for the service I provided.

The older adult services profession is not always easy and smooth. There are challenges that come along the way especially dealing with difficult patients. I recently had a 60 year old patient in our rehab unit. This patient had a history of blood clots and as a result of these, she lost her left leg, has a colostomy, tube feeding and catheter. This patient appeared very depressed. She often refused cares, medications, treatments etc. Her room was always closed per her request and she declined chaplain visits. On this one particular day, she refused a blood thinner to prevent further blood clots and also refused all lab draws. I felt I had to do something. I took time to find out why this patient was acting that way. The patient appeared upset that she had to go through a lot at a young age. Through this

incidence, I learned that we have to accept our patients' decisions as long as they are in their right mind and they understand the consequence of their actions.