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Immediate safety needs during altered mood, cognition or behaviour Delirium

Mental Health Nursing | Focused diagnosis-based template

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Fictional educational example. Individualize using verified patient findings, authorized treatment and current local protocols. No real patient record or observed outcome is claimed.

Clinical assessment

Subjective: Family reports sudden change from usual alertness during acute illness.

Objective findings and required checks: Fluctuating attention and disorientation; urgent medical assessment is needed.

Physical examination and investigations: Assess baseline, observations, glucose, oxygenation, medicines, pain, hydration and cause-directed investigations.

Supply actual values, units, timing and trends during supervised application. Do not invent missing clinical data.

Clinical focus and pathophysiology

Delirium: Acute illness, medicines or physiological disturbance disrupt attention and cognition.

Medical / surgical management

Treat underlying causes, maintain orientation and sensory aids, protect sleep and use least restrictive safety measures.

Illustrative drug and treatment study

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Medicine / treatment	Purpose	Nursing checks
Medication review	Identify possible contributors	Avoid adding sedating drugs routinely
prescribed cause-specific treatment	Correct the identified trigger	Monitor response and adverse effects.

Treatment examples are not a prescription. Verify the authorized product, dose, route, timing, contraindications and current local product information.

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Focused nursing-problem template

Nursing diagnoses use original clinical problem wording. They are not the licensed NANDA-I classification. Verify any formal label or code against your institution's licensed current edition; select actual or risk diagnoses only when supported by assessment.

Context task: Establish the immediate clinical priorities and verify the baseline before assuming a diagnosis.

Set individualized measurable targets and an exact review time. Select actual or risk statements only when supported by assessment.

Assessment: subjective / objective	Nursing diagnosis: original problem wording	Short- and longer-term goals	Nursing interventions with rationale	Evaluation
Ask: Ask directly about safety, self-harm, aggression and access to harmful means. Assess: Assess risk, observation needs and environmental hazards collaboratively.	Immediate safety needs during altered mood, cognition or behaviour. Possible factors: reduced judgment, severe distress or loss of control. Validate against the patient's assessment.	Short-term: At the next patient-specific reassessment: Immediate risks are addressed using the least restrictive appropriate care plan. Longer-term: Before the clinically approved transition or agreed follow-up: A collaborative safety and follow-up plan is documented before transition.	1. Escalate imminent danger immediately and maintain observation according to risk and local policy. Rationale: Timely support protects life and prevents unobserved deterioration. 2. Use de-escalation, respectful communication and proportionate environmental safeguards. Rationale: Dignity and reduced stimulation can support safer engagement. 3. Review risk with the multidisciplinary team and document changes and handover. Rationale: Risk is dynamic and requires continuity across staff and settings. 4. Treat underlying causes, maintain orientation and sensory aids, protect sleep and use least restrictive safety measures. Rationale: Acute illness, medicines or physiological disturbance disrupt attention and cognition. The condition-specific plan addresses the underlying problem while response is monitored.	Record the baseline and reassessed finding, the time and whether this goal is met, partly met or not met. If not met, reassess causes and revise or escalate. Do not record an unobserved improvement.

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Apply this template

Complete with verified data: assessment cues; supported actual problem or risk; measurable outcome and review time; selected authorized interventions and rationale; observed response and next action.

Subjective / objective cues: _____

Patient-specific target and review time: _____

Evaluation evidence and next action: _____

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Health education and continuing care

Explain the fluctuating course to family, encourage familiar support and arrange cognitive review after recovery.

Transition only after clinical readiness is confirmed. Reconcile medicines, check access and caregiver support, and document who will review the patient and when.

Urgent warning signs

Declining consciousness, focal deficit, shock or uncontrolled danger requires immediate escalation.

Evaluation and conclusion

For each goal, document met, partly met or not met using observed evidence and the review time. Reassess and revise if progress is inadequate. Individual assessment, prioritized care and coordinated review guide this topic.

Quick Revision

- Acute illness, medicines or physiological disturbance disrupt attention and cognition.
- Priority concerns: Immediate safety needs during altered mood, cognition or behaviour.
- Declining consciousness, focal deficit, shock or uncontrolled danger requires immediate escalation.
- Explain the fluctuating course to family, encourage familiar support and arrange cognitive review after recovery.

Exam / viva: What assessment evidence supports this problem, and what measurable result would demonstrate improvement?

References

Nursing Fundamentals, 2e - Ernstmeyer & Christman (editors), Open RN / WisTech Open, 2024
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/nursingfundamentals/

Nursing Mental Health and Community Concepts, 2e - Open RN / WisTech Open, 2025
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Nursing Pharmacology, 2e - Ernstmeyer & Christman (editors), Open RN / WisTech Open, 2023
https://wtcs.pressbooks.pub/pharmacology2e/

B.Sc. Nursing curriculum and regulatory notifications - Indian Nursing Council
https://www.indiannursingcouncil.org/gazette-notification

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