If you’ve been involved in transplant nursing for some
time, it’s likely that your experiences could certainly
be of value to others in your position. You may want
to consider a case study presentation for an upcoming
ITNS event. Even if you have never prepared
and presented a case study before, the following
information and step-by-step guide will make it easy
for you to share your knowledge with colleagues.

Identifying
Case Study Possibilities

Think about your transplant nursing practice and all that
you have observed, perceived, and experienced. Begin
to identify interesting and unusual patient or caregiver
situations. Distinguish those transplant nursing experiences
that exceeded the daily challenges you had with other
transplant patients. A pertinent case study will highlight
a new or unique aspect of your transplant patient and
nursing care. Consider the following suggestions:

- Identify any distinctive problems or issues you have
  experienced in your nursing area while caring for a
  transplant patient.

- Identify transplant patients who exceeded the
daily challenges you normally face with other
transplant patients. Be sure to identify the specific
complexities that these transplant patients presented
that others did not.

- Identify any interesting or uncommon family
dynamic or psychosocial situations you have
experienced with a particular transplant patient.

- Identify any unusual patient history or diagnosis
resulting in a need for a transplant.

- Identify ethical considerations and complexities
you have encountered in caring for a transplant patient.

- Identify any new or progressive treatment protocols
that your transplant patients are receiving, and
identify a patient associated with these regimens.

Preparing to Write
Your Case Study Abstract

The organization and content of a case study abstract
is distinctly different from a research or process-
 improvement abstract. It is a challenge to concisely
summarize your topic in detail without revealing too
much information about the patient, and yet still
adequately tell your story. A number of important points
to remember when writing an abstract include:

- Identify two learning objectives and references.
Both are important in preparing to write your case study
abstract and are required of most abstracts. A review
of the literature will assist you in identifying reading
materials that relate to your case study. If you have
never done a literature review before, library personnel
or a knowledgeable colleague can assist you.

Reading journal articles and book chapters related to
your case study topic will confirm your perspective on
how common or uncommon your chosen case study is.
You may decide to locate a similar case study in the
literature or focus instead on particular aspects of your case study, such as the patient’s diagnosis, medication regimen, or learning deficits.

Further reading will assist you in gaining additional understanding of the case study you are writing. Select your references for your abstract from your reading material.

Identification of your learning objectives prior to writing the abstract may assist you in organizing your case study abstract.

- Prepare a content outline to include in your abstract. Focus on the key elements and issues surrounding the patient. For example, when gathering background information, streamline the patient’s medical history to fit the focus of your abstract and use the facts most relevant to your case study discussion. Meanwhile, don’t lose sight of your intended learning objectives.

- Protect patient confidentiality by providing a pseudonym to keep your patient anonymous. Your hospital may have a process in place that you must follow when presenting on a patient. Contact your hospital’s Risk Management Program or Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Helpful Hints for Your Case Presentation

Once your abstract has been reviewed and accepted for presentation, the next step is putting together your talk to showcase your case study in more detail. Your abstract will be your template from which to expand your thoughts and ideas. Here are some helpful hints:

- Check on how much time is allotted for your talk and for audience questions. The time limits will help you gauge the length of your presentation.

- Include facts/figures or background information about your patient not included in your abstract.

- Help your audience understand your patient and the intended issues for discussion from the beginning.

- Tell a story with a beginning and an end. Ensure that you include patient outcomes or circumstances that have changed since writing the abstract.

- Refer to your abstract often to confirm your focus points and assure that you are not straying from your intended purpose.
• Define the impact of this patient on transplant nursing practice.

• Point out any social or ethical considerations unique to your patient and the involvement of multidisciplinary team members.

• Assist the audience in making the connections that you desire and apply what you have taught them. Encourage the audience to learn and “think”. Interactive presentations are fun and welcome.

**Useful Resources**

Fellow ITNS members, nursing colleagues, social workers, physicians, pharmacists, and transplant patients and families help us to define a case study. Transplant nurses look forward to hearing about the clinical practice of other transplant nurses. Abstract presenters share their clinical experiences for professional growth but, more importantly, they enjoy the opportunity to impart what they have learned to an interested audience of transplant nurses. Included below is a list of useful resources to assist you in identifying, preparing, writing, and presenting a transplant case study.


This educational resource was developed and made possible by the International Transplant Nurses Society (ITNS). A complimentary, downloadable copy of this publication is available at www.itns.org <http://www.itns.org>.
“ITNS is committed to the promotion of excellence in transplant clinical nursing through the provision of educational and professional growth opportunities, interdisciplinary networking and collaborative activities, and transplant nursing research.”

Membership Profile

Position descriptions
- 42% of ITNS members classify themselves as transplant coordinators
- 23% of ITNS members classify themselves as staff nurses
- 15% of ITNS members classify themselves as charge nurses/ team leaders/ supervisors/ instructors or nurse administrators
- 10% of ITNS members classify themselves as clinical nurse specialists
- 4% of ITNS members classify themselves as nurse practitioners
- 2% of ITNS members classify themselves as research
- 2% of ITNS members are employed by pharmaceutical or medical equipment/supply companies
- 2% of ITNS members have responsibilities related to procurement and working with donor families

Geographical Reach

- 77% of ITNS members reside in the USA
- 12% reside in Canada
- 10% reside in the UK and Europe
- There are also members in Mexico, South America, Asia, New Zealand, and Australia

Organ Focus

- 64% have a specialty interest in renal transplantation
- 52% have a specialty interest in liver transplantation
- 40% have a specialty interest in pancreas transplantation
- 33% of our members care for pediatric patients
- 24% have a specialty interest in heart transplantation
- 19% have a specialty interest in lung transplantation
- 13% have a specialty interest in small bowel transplantation
- 7% have a specialty interest in islet cell transplantation
- 2% have a specialty interest in bone marrow transplantation

Focusing on skills

- ITNS offers transplant-specific education targeted to all transplant health-professionals from the novice transplant nurse through the seasoned clinician at its annual symposium and regional workshops.
- ITNS educational endeavors provide transplant nurses with clinical practice updates and methods to improve patient care at all levels.
- ITNS provides regular immunomodulation updates on both new and existing products as well as dosing and side effect issues.
- ITNS offers opportunities for clinicians to present papers, research findings, and case studies at its Annual Symposium.
- ITNS provides grant funding for Transplant Nursing Research.
- ITNS provides educational and membership benefits to transplant professionals who are in non-traditional nursing roles such as case managers, home health care, and corporate representatives.
- ITNS provides networking opportunities with other transplant professionals around the world.
- ITNS provides access to ITNS-developed or ITNS-sponsored patient educational materials.
- ITNS offers bedside nurses and clinicians a voice in transplant policy making.