

Imaging Scenario: The Case of Jacob and the Diseased Leg

Scenario #2

Payton Medlock; Ethics 101; 11/19/2020

In scenario number two of Jacob and his diseased leg, Jacob experienced a fracture in his leg. During his follow up appointment, Jacob and his parents experience his doctor not replacing his gloves between Jacob and a patient with osteomyelitis. Jacob returns for another follow up appointment and has an abscess and is diagnosed with osteomyelitis and is unable to return for the remainder of his football season and creates the loss of a college scholarship.

The problem in this scenario is that the doctor obviously didn't replace his gloves between patients and he was being watched while doing so. Solution number one would be for the doctor to correctly replace his gloves and practice better infection control between both of his patients. If the doctor would have practiced this, Jacob wouldn't have contracted infection from the passing on of germs from the other patient. Solution number two would be for the doctor to consider patient confidentiality and close the doors to both exam rooms. If the doctor had done that, Jacob and his parents would not have seen what was going on in the other patient's room, whether he chose to correctly use gloves or not. Solution number three would be for Jacob and his parents to speak up. They could have brought the situation that they saw to the attention of the doctor and prevented this case from happening. Because the family experienced negligence on the doctors part and didn't speak up, they also take part in the situation.

I think the best solution in this instance would be for the doctor to appropriately practice hand hygiene and infection control and patient privacy. I think this is the best solution because he knows exactly what he should have been doing but failed to do it. He also knew what the

other patient had been diagnosed with and still continued negligence. Not only did he just deal with two separate patients without gloves, he was dealing with a wound. While I also believe that the patient or his family should have spoken up, they place their trust in the hands of the doctor and the doctor should not have let this happen, especially with something so important that nobody should forget. I also think that this lies in the hands of the doctor because he is the healthcare professional and neglected to follow the Standards of Care.

While the doctor didn't take part in any criminal activity, his situation still falls under unintentional tort for negligence. He didn't use proper hand hygiene to protect his patients and he didn't close the exam room doors, which allows confidential information to be heard by other patients/employees throughout the clinic.

If I were put in this position and had to address this scenario, I would lay the blame in the hands of the doctor. He could easily defend himself and say that they didn't speak up about it, but he is a licensed healthcare professional and caused more damage than he did good in this instance. This doctor failed to show his professional values in not being aware of the conduct of his workplace. He also failed to comply with the Standards of Ethics because those rely on professional and personal morality and responsibility. Professional Standard of Ethics is even worse to have been breached because they must be adhered to at all times, regardless of difficult circumstances. I feel like the doctor is at fault especially because he wasn't having to deal with cultural issues or the patients ethical beliefs, so this case could have easily been avoided.