

Ethical Case Study
Due by September 24, 2021, 5 pm

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1. State the ethical dilemma in a clear, simple statement.

As nurses it is our job to educate our patients. We must teach them about their disease process, and the ways they can help themselves control it, or help it. We all run along those patients that are non-compliant and do not want to help themselves, but sometimes the patient just needs more education and understanding on the importance of their treatment and stopping bad habits. Mr. Weems seems to be non-compliant with his treatment and keeping himself well. Non-compliance is an ethical issue we deal with often in healthcare.

2. How would you handle this situation?

If I was the nurse in this situation, I would do my best to continue to educate Mr. Weems. I wouldn't just give up the first time that I see him non-complying. I would offer resources to help that best help fit his learning style, and those that are appropriate for his age and educational level. There are barriers to learning that can affect a patient's understanding, so we must find ways to help break down this barrier that best fit the patient. Seeing and keeping up with the patient is the best way to show them that you really care about them, and you want them to do better. Some people need that extra support and lots of education.

3. How did this make you feel?

There can be a level of frustration there when we see that our patients are not complying, but I believe we still need to take the time to continue to educate them. We can offer other ways of education that fit them best. Now, if after a while Mr. Weems is still not complying with his treatment and not taking his medications like he is supposed to and doesn't stop smoking, there is not much we can do for him. There are those that have no desire to change their ways, and sometimes the patient has to want to help themselves before we can help them.

4. Have you encountered unethical situations at work?

Yes I have. I had a patient who had just had surgery on a fractured tibia, and a fractured wrist. He agreed to surgery, but was non-compliant with treatment after surgery. He refused to get up and ambulate with physical therapy. He refused his medication like Lovenox and others, unless it was for pain. He did not want the SCD's

applied to his legs either. Other nurses and I continued to educate him on why this was important for him to have like preventing blood clots from just lying in bed and not being active, and preventing other illnesses from occurring like pneumonia.

- Was it addressed?

The Dr.'s would make their rounds every day with the patient and explain to him the risk he was putting himself in by not receiving the treatment that they were giving him.

- Which nursing principles did this violate? (see the documents below)

Autonomy is an important factor that every patient must have so that they can feel that they are in as much control as possible especially when they are in a new environment like the hospital. The patient also should participate in their plan of care. This patient was in complete control, but it was affecting his care by not complying with the treatment by Dr.'s orders.

After all, we still offered our best care to the patient to help him, this falls under beneficence.

Universal Ethical Principles (Bioethics)

- **Autonomy:** the ability to make your own decisions and act upon them with no interference from others
- **Veracity:** telling the truth
- **Beneficence:** doing good or performing an action that benefits another under all circumstances
- **Nonmaleficence:** do no harm
- **Confidentiality:** protect patient privacy
- **Justice:** fairness/impartiality
- **Role fidelity:** work within your scope of practice

Provision 1: The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.

Provision 2: The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, or community.

Provision 3: The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.

Provision 4: The nurse is responsible and accountable for individual nursing practice and determines the appropriate delegation of tasks consistent with the nurse's obligation to provide optimum patient care.

Provision 5: The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to preserve integrity and safety, to maintain competence, and to continue personal and professional growth.

Provision 6: The nurse participates in establishing, maintaining, and improving health care environments and conditions of employment conducive to the provision of quality health care and consistent with the values of the profession through individual and collective action.

Provision 7: The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development.

Provision 8: The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national, and international efforts to meet health needs.

Provision 9: The profession of nursing, as represented by associations and their members, is responsible for articulating nursing values, for maintaining the integrity of the profession and its practice, and for shaping social policy.