Imaging Scenario: Student Competency

Scenario #5

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Ethics 101

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Summary

A biker arrives at the emergency room, he is severely injured. He is covered in tattoos and has bad hygiene. The computed tomography (CT) imaging specialist is afraid but mostly irritated that his accident has interrupted her night. She instantly judged him and she also believed he deserved what he received and hope he had signed a donor card. The imaging specialist had no problem showing these emotions to her patient and his loved ones. A few days go by and she is called into her manager's office after a very negative customer service survey arrives. The health care worker is questioned about her feeble attempt to provide a high-quality exam for the biker. She sees the tattooed man at the hospital again and almost doesn't recognize him because he is now in a business suit, this tattooed man is the hospital's attorney. When the imaging specialist learns the identity of this man she is embarrassed and doesn't know what to say.

Ethical Evaluation

The imaging specialist should have kept her personal feelings aside. Her only job was to care for and protect her patient. Therefore, she has failed her duty of professionalism which is an awareness of the conduct, aims, and qualities. This situation can be broken down into an ethical analysis process. Step one, identify the problem, the problem was her neglecting her professional duty to the patient. Step two, develop an alternate solution, for example making sure she has enough sleep and is not burned out from her demanding job (health care professionals responsibility). Step three, select the best solution, remember as a health care provider you must keep all your beliefs and values aside because your patient's health is the goal. Step four is to defend your selection. The imaging technologist enacted the engineering ethical model, in which the imaging professional views patients as a condition, or procedure. Resulting in the patient

losing all autonomy. This is an ethical issue because radiographers and all health care workers should treat all patients as persons with dignity and worth without discriminating. The technologist broke one of the rules of ethics, number 7, “the delegation, or acceptance of any delegation, of professional functions that might create an unnecessary danger to a patient.” The fact that she was annoyed that he interrupted her night and the lack of patient care, she could have seriously injured her patient.

Legal Considerations

This unnecessary situation could have been a lot worse if the hospital's attorney had decided to take legal action. The imaging professional committed an unintentional tort (negligence) by discriminating against this injured man. It should not have made a difference if the CT technologist had known who the biker was. An unintentional tort of negligence is when the conduct falls below the standards of conduct established by law. If harm came to this patient a lawsuit or individual (technologist) could have been court-ordered to pay monetary damages, loss of license, potential unemployment. This unprofessional behavior also slanders the hospital's reputation. The technologist did not follow the Code of Ethics, for example, " number 2, the radiological technologist acts to advance the principal objective of the profession to provide services to humanity with full respect for the dignity of mankind." When you become a health care provider you have personal obligations which means, when a trusting professional relationship is established, lawsuits are less likely to occur (PowerPoint slide 61).

Professional Issues

Personal morality reflects lessons of right and wrong that were taught to us at an early age and this is very important to remember when having a job in healthcare. Health professionals have duties to provide due care, maintain professional competence, and maintain the confidentiality of patient information. The technologist was not professional, and she did not maintain her duties as a healthcare provider. There are 6 moral principles in health care and one of them is nonmaleficence which means no evil; an obligation not to inflict harm in any way to the patient. This is the primary responsibility of the healthcare professional. Beneficence is to do only good for your patient and with her aggravation of his presents in the hospital, this was not given to him. Nonmaleficence and Beneficence have goals to consider, for example, goals of treatment or procedure your result should be what benefits your patient. Autonomy means self-determination, respecting the independence of others, and acting with self-reliance. The CT technologist took this away from this hard-working attorney, she did not see him as a human bean, only as a problem. Fidelity and justice are to be faithful and to act with equity, which the technologist would not have treated her family member or loved ones like she treated her patient. During the conversation between the tech and her boss, she had an obligation, to tell the truth about this situation (Veracity).

My Personal Opinion

I chose this scenario because I hate when people judge others. The computer tomography (CT) imaging specialist went into her career knowing she had to care for others, no matter if you have a bad day, going through problems at home, you cannot bring that to your work. Your patient does not deserve that. Your patient is your priority and everything else needs to be put on hold while you give your patient the absolute best care you can because they are having an even worse day. No one wants to be in the hospital, or poked with needles all day, or be exposed in

ways that embarrass them. The imaging specialist needs to take some time to care for herself to not be burned out and if that does not work then she needs to find a different career.