

Scenario No. 2

The Case of Jacob and the Diseased Leg

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Dr. M's performance during Jacob's checkup raised serious concerns, as multiple errors were made that compromised patient care and violated ethical standards. One significant issue was Dr. M's breach of patient confidentiality when discussing patient conditions and instructions with open exam room doors. Maintaining patient confidentiality is an important part of medical ethics, and breaks the trust patients place in their healthcare providers as well as the protection of the patient's rights.

Furthermore, ethically the failure to perform hand hygiene, such as not washing hands and not re-gloving before continuing with Jacob's post-operative examination, are serious deviations from standard medical practices. Failing to maintain proper hygiene protocols can lead to unintentional harm to the patient, as it increases the risk of infection and compromises the healing process, especially when dealing with wounds that are not fully healed. Which is why Jacob contracted the infection.

From a legal perspective, Dr. M's actions may also raise concerns about potential legal repercussions, as breaches of patient confidentiality and deviations from established medical practices can have legal implications. It is recommended when these situations occur to review and address these legal concerns, most of the time when these situations are addressed it ends up in a court hearing with the patient suing the doctor, much like in Jacob's case.

In conclusion, Dr. M's choices represent a violation of ethical, legal, and professional obligations to the patient. These actions not only tarnish the hospital's reputation where Dr. M is employed but also compromise his professional standing, resulting in harm to the patient under

his care. These actions collectively reflect a failure on Dr. M's part to adhere to the principles of negligence and non-maleficence, which are fundamentals in medical ethics. Negligence involves a breach of the duty of care, and Dr. M's disregard for patient confidentiality and hygiene protocols shows a failure to meet this duty. Non-maleficence, the principle of doing no harm, was also compromised by the failure to perform hygiene, placing Jacob at an increased risk of harm.