

Fortenberry-Comprehensive Ethical Scenario- 2024FA

Imaging Scenario: Student Comprehensive Evaluation

The Case of the Biker: Scenario #5

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A patient arrived at the hospital after being in a collision with a car. The CT tech called in, noticed he's dressed as a biker, is unshaven, and needs a bath. The CT tech displays obvious fear and irritation when talking to the patient and his buddies because she sees that they are bikers. Her irritation towards the patient shows that she believes he most likely got what he deserved, which gives a very unsuccessful patient care situation when she assesses him. The following day she is called into her manager's office after a negative customer service feedback and is questioned about her feeble attempt to provide high-quality care. A few weeks later the patient comes in for a follow-up and is seen very clean and shaved. He happened to be the hospital's attorney who enjoys bike riding with his friends during the weekends, which leaves the tech embarrassed and speechless.

Throughout the exam, the CT tech should have treated him with the same care as she gives to each of her other patients. Her feelings should have been pushed to the side so that way the patient could have gotten the quality of care that he deserved. The tech's judgment based on the lifestyle and appearance of the patient shows personal bias towards how he is a biker. The issue of conflict of interest arises between the tech and the patient. This creates ethical problems of fairness and justice within the environment; all patients deserve to be treated fairly, but her personal bias towards the patient gave him inadequate care. When a conflict of interest arises within a patient or in the professional environment, it compromises having a respectful attitude towards the patients and others around.

Her knowledge of knowing who the patient was shouldn't have made a difference since each patient should be treated with the same respect. In her case, if she did know who the patient was, a difference would be made, and she would have given him better care than she originally did. Because of the difference it would have made, this would be considered discrimination in professional care, being known as classism. Classism would be defined as the assumption that certain people are superior because of their social status, economic status, or position in a group or organization. Seeing how she described him as being unshaved and needing a bath, along with him wearing leather, judged and discriminated against him as a patient. If she had known who he originally was, she would have given him proper care, but instead, characterizing him with what she believes is a lower-class organization group of bikers led her to improper care.

During this examination the patient should have had every right to know about the treatment that he's fixing to undergo along with informed decisions. Since her interaction with the biker and his friends showed judgment, she more than likely did not communicate effectively in favor of the patient, which interferes with patient autonomy. If the tech's judgment leads to inadequate care, it could undermine the patient's ability to receive necessary information and make choices about treatment and scans. Healthcare workers are expected to uphold a level of standard of care and professionalism. The tech's irritation and fear compromised her ability to withhold that expectation, which can lead to the negative impact that puts on the integrity of the workplace environment.

The primary problem at hand throughout this situation is that the CT tech's personal bias against the patient leads to improper care. This raises the attention of ethical dilemmas such as discrimination, conflict of interest, and patient autonomy, which can cause potential risks of the patient becoming harmed or miscommunicated with. The tech's attitude showing fear and

irritation could compromise health outcomes of the patient, which could lead to violating ethical principles known as beneficence and non-maleficence. If the tech had developed alternate solutions like acknowledging and addressing bias, referring to another technician, or even involving a supervisor, the ethical issues could have been avoided. Acknowledging and addressing bias would have been the best solution. The tech taking accountability for her feelings and pushing them to the side to be able to properly care for the patient would have been a better outcome for the patient's health and the work environment. Realizing the feelings towards a patient and ignoring them when providing care, the tech would be able to do that with other patients moving forward and be able to treat each of them equally and be given the fairness they deserve.

At any facility a patient is given the legal right to receive appropriate care; the failure to provide that standard of care could result in medical negligence because it can result in harm towards the patient. Failure to provide for a patient because of personal bias and discrimination could also result in serious harm to the patient, which could lead to discrimination claims made against the tech. Patients have the right to make claims under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if they feel they were treated unfairly because of their appearance and lifestyle. Discriminating against a patient can also result in unintentional torts. When she gives him less than successful care, she could have overlooked any critical condition or symptoms the patient might have, which could have made her fail to administer appropriate care that was needed.

Because the tech had bias issues towards the patient, her behavior can lead to inadequate information being given to the patient. Patients must be fully informed to be able to make decisions about their health; if the tech communicated with irritability and fear, there is a great chance that not everything was communicated properly. This could run into legal issues with

informed consent along with malpractice. If the communication and care were not clear and caused significant harm towards the patient because of bias and discrimination, malpractice would be filed. The tech would have to be proven guilty of malpractice, and if harm was a result of negligence, then malpractice did take place.

Professional issues that relate to the code of ethics and rules of ethics took place throughout this situation. The tech would be in violation of codes 1, 3, and 5, along with rule 5. Code 1 states that the radiographer conducts themselves in a professional manner, responds to patients needs, supports colleagues and associates in providing quality patient care. The tech provided less than quality patient care because of her opinions. Her professionalism with the patient was not up to code and would have created problems within the workplace environment as well because of her carelessness. Code 3 states the radiographer delivers patient care and service unrestricted by concerns of personal attributes or the nature of the disease or illness and without discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, or socioeconomic status. This scenario is based on the tech having a personal bias and discriminatory thoughts against the patient. With her violating this code, she affected the workplace environment negatively because the patient and others would have negative things to say about the hospital and staff. Lastly, code 5 states the radiographer assesses situations and acts in the best care of the patient, which is not something the tech did. She acted fearful and irritated when consulting with the patient, which did not provide the best of care. Others might think this particular hospital is careless and rude to patients which affects the jobs of her coworkers. Rule 5 states failure or inability to perform radiologic technology with reasonable skill and safety. This relates because she had a failure to perform to the best of her abilities with this certain patient and gave him less than successful care.

Each ethical, legal, and professional issue is guided by a set of rules not to violate in order to be responsible and respectful in your everyday and working life. Ethical issues are based on personal morals and values. They are not usually legally binding, but they are often subjective. Legal issues are defined by written laws and enforced by authorities. If any of the legal issues are violated, it could result in jail time. Professional issues are specific to a certain profession, which are normally outlined by a code of ethics and a rule of ethics. It may include behaviors that are acceptable in everyday life, but in a professional environment they are not acceptable. Each helps us to become better employees by giving respect and equal treatment to the best of our abilities to patients and other coworkers.

Seeing the possible outcomes for ethical, legal, and professional issues this scenario would not let me put myself in a situation like that. If I were placed in the shoes of the CT tech, I would still give him the best possible care, communication, and make sure not to overlook any other outcomes. Treating a patient with inadequate care knowing you could have made a better difference in their life would take a toll on me. Being placed in the scenario, if I did have those feelings for bikers, I would push my feelings aside to assure giving him the equal care he deserves. I would realize having those feelings towards a patient would make me take accountability for my feelings and address my own personal issues towards being biased. No patient deserves to have our mind distracted, so addressing it quickly would help in the long run with assuring quality care.