

Imaging Scenario: Student Comprehensive Evaluation

Scenario #5- The Case of the Biker

Ashley Sanchez; Ethics 101; December 12, 2025

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In the imaging scenario, it begins with a biker involved in a collision with a car. The biker arrives at the ER along with his friends and is ordered a CT scan of his head. The biker has tattoo sleeves, appears to have not been clean-shaven, and unclean. As soon as the CT technologist sees him, she instantly judges him based on his and his friend's looks, making her feel fearful and irritated. She feels as though he deserves what he receives, not knowing whether he was at fault or not. She is careless on how the exam is performed and the outcome. After receiving a negative customer service survey, she is called into her manager's office to find out why a high-quality exam had not been performed. After some time, the biker, now dressed in a professional suit, returns for a follow-up CT scan. Looking completely different from the time before, it is revealed that he is an attorney for the hospital. After finding out this information, the CT technologist is embarrassed and at a loss for words.

One main ethical issue in the scenario was the CT technologist's bias and stereotyping due to fear and irritation. Because of this, the patient did not receive the quality care that is expected according to ARRT standards. Some solutions to this situation could include the CT tech maintaining her professionalism regardless of her biases and stereotypes. Another approach might be for the technologist to ask another imaging technologist to assist or take over the exam, ensuring the patient receives a high-quality examination without personal feelings interfering. One other solution is for the technologist to calm down and let her feelings deescalate before she enters the exam room. I believe the best solution is for the CT tech to uphold her professionalism despite her biases and judgments and to continue the exam with a positive attitude. This is ideal because, in healthcare, you will encounter a variety of patients and situations. The CT tech

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can work on her professional attitude by being less judgmental and biased. Since she will encounter patients of different races, backgrounds, religions, and groups in the future, it is best for her to know how to consistently maintain professionalism without relying on others to step in to ensure high-quality care. In doing so, she will consistently provide high-quality care that is in the best interest of the patient and their safety, while avoiding discrimination. Doing this can also prevent legal issues in the future.

Some legal considerations in this scenario include the CT technologist taking a poor-quality CT scan due to discrimination and stereotyping. This could be considered an unintentional tort, specifically negligence (gross negligence) or malpractice. It is considered negligence because the technologist was careless in the performance of her exam, failing to meet the standard of care. Had the biker's condition worsened due to having delayed treatment or a misdiagnosis because of the poorly performed exam, it could be considered malpractice. There are four elements needed to prove malpractice: duty, breach of duty, causation, and damages. In this scenario, the CT tech had a duty to fulfill a high-quality image using CT. She breached that duty by performing a low-standard exam. Any delay in treatment or misdiagnosis caused by the low-quality image would be a cause, therefore, leading to damages such as worsened conditions to the biker or additional medical bills. Some legal obligations that could arise due to discriminating against a patient based on appearances can violate one's federal civil rights. Knowing the law as a hospital attorney, the "biker" could choose to take further action, and the hospital and the technologists could face civil lawsuits and fines. The technologist could also face losing her ARRT certification. Maintaining professionalism by being unbiased and non-discriminatory can prevent this situation from occurring.

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In this scenario, the CT technologist violated several Standards of Ethics according to ARRT. The Codes of Ethics that were violated were #1 (Act in a professional manner), #2 (Provide services to humanity with full respect for dignity), #3 (Deliver patient care and services without discrimination), #4 (Use equipment for designed purpose, and employ procedures and techniques appropriately), and #5 (Act in the best interest of the patient). By stereotyping and being judgmental, the technologist failed to treat the biker with compassion and failed to give him high-quality treatment. She did not use the equipment properly to get the best results. The Rules of Ethics that were violated were #7 (Unprofessional conduct). She created unnecessary danger to the patient's life and health by performing a feeble exam.

In this situation, I would handle this scenario differently. Regardless of the biker's appearance or the time of night, I would not let that interfere with the care that the patient deserves. In a situation where fear or frustration should arise, I would maintain my professionalism and set any personal feelings aside. I would perform the examination as expected according to ARRT Standards and treat the patient with dignity and respect. A non-biased and non-discriminatory attitude in the medical profession should be obtained as much as possible to prevent any situations as this one.

References

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Www.arrt.org. <https://www.arrt.org/pages/about/about-us/governance>

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