

What would you do?

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

3-1 Discussion: What would you do?

In healthcare, addressing ethical dilemmas is paramount to providing patient-centered care while upholding legal and moral standards. The following scenarios illustrate the complexities healthcare professionals face and how to navigate them effectively.

Scenario 1: Addressing Transgender Patients

When a transgender woman presents with a driver's license indicating male gender, the staff should address her by her chosen name and pronouns, adhering to non-discrimination laws. Legally, this respect aligns with her gender identity. The patient's legal name and gender should be recorded as per identification documents, but her chosen name and pronouns should be noted for respectful communication. To foster a welcoming environment, staff should undergo training on cultural competence and sensitivity, ensuring they interact respectfully and inclusively.

Scenario 2: Addressing Suspected Child Abuse

In the case of an 11-year-old with suspicious fractures, advise your co-worker to report the suspected abuse to child protective services, as mandated by law. Document observations and patient statements meticulously. Despite the child's history of joking, multiple fractures warrant a serious investigation, prioritizing the child's safety. Failure to report suspected abuse can result in legal consequences for the healthcare provider, while reporting protects both the child and the provider from liability.

Scenario 3: Healthcare Decisions for Vulnerable Populations

For elderly patients needing organ transplants or brain-dead patients on life support, decisions should be guided by ethical principles. Evaluate the patient's health, recovery potential, and quality of life post-transplant. Discuss the prognosis, quality of life, and patient's wishes with the family and healthcare team. Decisions should balance beneficence, autonomy, and

non-maleficence. Insurers should consider the cost-benefit ratio of procedures and ethical resource allocation, balancing necessary care with sustainable fund use, guided by justice and fairness.

Scenario 4: Patient Information Confidentiality

For a newly emigrated family asking to relay medical information to a daughter rather than the patient, inform them that the patient has the right to know about their own health. Withholding information without consent violates patient rights and confidentiality laws. Uphold ethical principles of autonomy and beneficence by ensuring direct communication with the patient unless they designate a representative.

Conclusion

Navigating ethical dilemmas in healthcare requires a balance of legal knowledge, ethical principles, and compassionate care. Addressing transgender patients with respect, reporting suspected child abuse, making informed decisions for vulnerable populations, and maintaining patient confidentiality are crucial in upholding the integrity of healthcare practice. These scenarios underscore the importance of ethical decision-making in ensuring patient well-being and professional accountability.