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Portfolio Project

PHIL222- Ethics in Health & Human Services

Patricia Morriss

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Essential Question Discussion

1. How do we determine the quality of life?

-Every human has the right to be treated fairly when it comes to determining someone's quality of life. If a person is on their death bed, and can no longer make decisions for themselves, it is up to the family to decide whether it is time to let them go. This can be an exceedingly difficult decision, as it is a difficult choice for a family to make. It is always important to refer to what the patient has previously stated they would want to happen in this circumstance. Having the patient make these decisions before they can no longer care for themselves is the best way to determine a person's quality of life.

2. Is it desirable for health to evolve?

- I would say that it is desirable for health to evolve. Experienced scientists and doctors can find new ways to benefit patients in how they are treated in a healthcare facility. This could be medications, immunizations, testing, and new ways of running a medical office that can benefit everyone. It is important for professionals in the medical field to always keep researching to make sure that patients are receiving the best care possible.

3. (additional question) Is physician assisted suicide a moral or immoral act?

- Physician assisted suicide is only moral if the patient gives consent to this happening. It is immoral if the patient is unaware of what is happening, and the physician is determining that the patient's quality of life is not worth saving.

The case study that I have chosen is called “Mutiny,” it is about nurses and doctors who work in the armed forces. There was a physician who was lazy, unprofessional, and dishonest; the nurses and doctors working with him did not know how to address the situation. They decided to document all his mistakes as a physician and report it to their hospital commander. Although what the nurses and doctors did was a form of mutiny, they had to do what was best for the safety of the patients. The physician was transferred to a smaller hospital in England, the nurses and doctors were relieved that the physician was gone. They were also dismayed because another hospital would have to deal with his unprofessionalism. I agree with the stance of the nurses and doctors, because they needed to do what was best for the patients. Even though they were forming a mutiny against their superior, they were ethically correct to speak up about the issues they were facing. The ethical model that they used to make this decision was utilitarianism. They did what was best for the greatest number of people, even if they went against their chief physician. It was not deontology, because out of duty and obligation, they would have continued to listen to their physician, even though he was irresponsible and unprofessional. Overall, the topic of this paper will discuss the importance of leadership in the medical field, and to always put the safety of patients first.

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W4 Activity- Annotated Bibliography

PHIL222- Ethics in Health & Human Services

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Annotated Bibliography

Ghiasipour, M., Mosadeghrad, A. M., Arab, M., & Jaafaripooyan, E. (2017, December 17). *Leadership challenges in health care organizations: The case of Iranian hospitals*. Medical journal of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6014751/>

This article provides details of leadership challenges in healthcare organizations. Those who are leaders in healthcare organizations must know how to manage a team to accomplish their goal. Their goal is to help patients to the best of their ability, and to always put their needs first. Without proper leadership, it is difficult for employees to efficiently and effectively treat patients. When leaders in healthcare are organized, encouraging, and confident, it makes the whole team work better together. When leaders are lazy, incompetent, and unorganized, the whole team begins to fall apart, and they can no longer work well together. Although this article focuses on hospitals in Iran, there must always be good leadership in any healthcare organization.

I chose this article because it shows the importance of strong leadership in healthcare organizations. It explains what happens when leaders inspire their workers, and when leaders are lazy and unorganized. Proper leadership is the key to making any business or organization successful and well-run. When healthcare workers must do more work because the leader is not doing their job, this means the patients are being treated inefficiently. This article also explains how leaders must have the proper education to do their job well. This way they can instruct and help their coworkers learn and grow in the medical field. A leader must be encouraging, put-together, responsible, and confident. This article will help my research, as the topic is leadership in healthcare organizations.

Healthcare leadership challenges: Preparing for the next generation. Division of Pharmacy Professional Development. (2018, May 23). <https://ce.pharmacy.wisc.edu/blog/healthcare-leadership-challenges/>

This article speaks about the challenges that leaders may face working in the healthcare field. Technology is always advancing within the medical field, making it difficult for healthcare workers and leaders to manage and keep up with. Leaders in the medical field are constantly dealing with new situations, technology, and conflicts that arise in a healthcare organization. They must be adaptable to dealing with difficult and unexpected problems that may arise. They must also be calm and confident under pressure. Without these abilities, they cannot be a good leader and example to those that they work with. The article also discusses how hospitals and doctors' offices are often short-staffed and it can be difficult to treat patients effectively and efficiently. If a leader fails to solve problems such as these, or is lazy, and incompetent, then they should be in this position.

This article will help me in this project, as it has taught me more about what leaders in healthcare must be able to accomplish. There are many factors that go in to being a good leader, but it is always important to remain calm and collected under pressure. They must also be the ones to make a difficult decision in a stressful situation. If a healthcare staff does not trust their leader to do this, then there is an issue that must be addressed. The leader must know how to manage the constant change that occurs on an everyday basis. This includes changes in technology, how many patients must be treated, and how many employees they must work with. This article has shown me how much pressure a leader is under in healthcare, and how important it is for them to be well-educated and confident in their abilities.

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Rough Draft

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Abstract

This paper will be discussing the responsibilities of healthcare professionals, and how they must always put the well-being of their patients first. The topic of this paper discusses mutiny in healthcare within the armed forces. It also demonstrates how poor leadership in a healthcare organization can affect the workers and satisfaction of the patients. It also explores two main ethical stances of utilitarianism and deontology, and how they can be applied to mutiny. The main goal of this paper is to provide information on how healthcare workers should appropriately address poor leadership in healthcare organizations, and how to always keep their patients' best interests in mind.

Introduction

Working in healthcare and the Air Force hospital as a doctor, nurse, or physician means they are obligated to care for their patients and respect their leaders. When there is poor leadership in healthcare, then the issue must be addressed in all circumstances. In this scenario, the head physician displayed poor leadership, leading to the patients not being taken care of properly. The other doctors and nurses formed a mutiny against him because he was lazy and not taking his job seriously. Mutiny in the armed forces is an especially important and controversial topic because they are going against the authority of their superior. The well-being of their patients must come before submitting to the authority of the head physician. The ethical stance they are taking is utilitarianism, as they are doing what is best for the greatest amount of people. By choosing utilitarianism they are putting the needs of the patients first, standing up to poor

leadership, and choosing what is ethical over duty and obligation of respecting the authority of their superior.

Putting Needs of Patients First

When working in the healthcare field, all healthcare professionals must put the needs of their patients first. If a healthcare professional sees that one of their coworkers is improperly treating a patient, or being disrespectful, they must address the situation immediately. This also applies to anyone in healthcare being honest when they treat a patient improperly. If someone knows they are not putting the needs of their patient first, then they must be honest about their performance and address the situation properly. Those who work in the healthcare field must make the patients' well-being their top priority. In the article it discussed how patients were being treated poorly, and the other doctors and nurses “were careful to document episodes of poor care, unscheduled absences, and lack of professionalism” (Griner). By documenting poor care, the situation is properly addressed, and changes can be made to prevent this from happening in the future. Although it may feel like one is betraying their coworker by calling them out when they are mistreating a patient, it is ethical to make sure all patients are being treated well and with respect.

Standing up to Poor Leadership

In the article “Mutiny,” the main problem is that the chief of medicine was an untrustworthy and unreliable physician. The other doctors and nurses had to do more work with patients, because the chief of medicine was not doing his job well. He did not lead his medical team by making each day more efficient, and making sure all patients were treated properly. Because of his poor leadership, the doctors and nurses came together, and they decided to form a

mutiny against him. Unfortunately, “poor leadership in HCOs could increase costs, reduce efficiency and effectiveness, and cause dissatisfaction among staff, ultimately resulting in lower patient satisfaction” (Ghiasipour). In the armed forces it is considered disrespectful to form a mutiny against a superior, but in this case, it had to be done. They documented the physician’s performance and took it to their hospital commander. He decided to relocate the head physician for the well-being of the patients in the Air Force hospital. Standing up to poor leadership is necessary when the patients are not receiving the best care possible.

Ethical Stance of Utilitarianism

The ethical stance chosen for mutiny is utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is the belief that an action is ethical if it has a good outcome for the greatest amount of people. This belief is not true in all circumstances, but it applies well to the topic of mutiny in the healthcare field. In the Air Force hospital, the chief of medicine was not doing his job well as a physician. Once the other doctors and nurses noticed that he would show up late for work, not treat all the patients, and show signs of carelessness, they decided to form a mutiny against him. It is true that “healthcare leaders have the daunting task of managing teams and facilities in a high stakes industry. They have to adapt to the increasing expenses, job vacancies and the increasing uncertainty” (*Healthcare Leadership Challenges*). The person who has a leadership role in the healthcare field must be responsible for making sure they are leading their team well, to create an efficient work environment for everyone. In the armed forces, they would not have formed a mutiny if they were following the ethical stance of deontology. Deontology is the belief that some decisions must be made from duty and obligation, no matter the consequences others may face. If they had chosen deontology, then they would have listened to and respected the authority of the chief of medicine. Since they chose utilitarianism, they put the needs of their patients before disowning

their own chief of medicine. The doctors and nurses did what was best for the greatest number of people, which was the healthcare professionals and patients. Once the chief of medicine was gone, they were given a replacement who was a wonderful leader and treated patients properly. Utilitarianism was the right stance to take in this scenario, as the patients' needs were being put first, and by establishing a new leader who would create an efficient work environment.

Counterargument

The doctors, nurses, and physicians who worked in the armed forces for the Air Force hospital had an obligation to respect the authority of their superiors. In the article, the chief of medicine was their authority who was showing poor leadership. He was very unreliable, and he would not show up for work when he was supposed to. Using the ethical stance of utilitarianism, it was stated that it was ethical for the doctors and nurses to form a mutiny against him. This is because the outcome would result in the greatest good for the greatest number of people. For those who do not believe in utilitarianism would argue that this decision was unethical. People who believe in deontology would argue that the healthcare workers had a moral obligation to respect the authority of the chief of medicine. They would also say that forming a mutiny is unethical as a mutiny is "an occasion when a group of people, especially soldiers or sailors, refuses to obey orders and/or attempts to take control from people in authority" (Cambridge). The doctors, nurses, and physicians working in the armed forces had a duty to respect and obey the orders of their chief of medicine. They also were questioning the judgment of why the hospital commander would hire someone who was not fit to do their job well. This also is a form of disrespect because they are going against the person who the hospital commander had set in charge. Those who believe in deontology would believe that forming a mutiny in the armed forces is unethical regardless of the consequences. Although those who believe in deontology

bring up a good point of disrespecting authority, their viewpoint is not ethical. It is more important to make sure all patients are being well-taken care of, than to let a chief of medicine keep doing their job poorly and mistreating patients. The hospital ended up receiving a new chief of medicine, and the whole hospital began to run much more efficiently. The doctors and nurses made the right decision when forming the mutiny. Although forming a mutiny was a difficult decision to make, they made the ethical choice by putting their patients first.

Conclusion

Healthcare professionals have a responsibility to their patients to always put their needs first, and to treat them with respect. In the article “Mutiny,” the doctors, nurses, and physicians all formed a mutiny against their chief of medicine. They worked for the armed forces at the Air Force hospital, and their chief of medicine was not fulfilling the requirements of his job obligations. By using the ethical stance of utilitarianism, they put the needs of their patients first, stood up to poor leadership, and chose what is ethical over duty and obligation of respecting their superior. Utilitarianism is the ethical stance of doing what is right for the greatest number of people. By forming the mutiny, they chose the well-being of their patients, and letting their hospital run efficiently, over their chief of medicine losing his job. By doing this, they received a much more qualified chief of medicine which allowed the hospital to be run efficiently. Overall, healthcare professionals must always provide the best care for their patients as possible, regardless of the consequences that they may face.

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