

Free case study on medical ethics

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



- Is there a moral dilemma? How do we know?

Morals are defined as the rules that govern behavior, they act as a guide in determining what is right and wrong in the society including in the medical field. From the case study above concerning Barbie, there is a moral dilemma. For an individual who has been an alcoholic to qualify for organ allocation they are required to have been sober for at least six months. However, Barbie drinks excessively and when her physician gets to learn of her condition he fails to reveal this information to the organ allocation organization. The moral dilemma in this case arises when the physician faces a conflict of interest between maintaining his patient's confidentiality and revealing an honest report to the organ allocation organization for the good of the general public. In the medical field, all practitioners including the physicians and nurses are expected to adhere to medical ethics.

- What additional information do you need to make a moral decision? What facts can you identify that you do not have that you feel are essential?

In order to make the proper moral decision in accordance to medical ethics for Barbie's case, more information is required so as to make a clear judgment. Some of the useful information may include finding out if she has been drinking for the past six months as this has not been clearly stated. It is also important to learn of the consequences or penalties that may accrue to the physician if the information he has concealed is discovered. From the information provided above, it is not clear if once removed from the list a patient can be allowed to reapply. It is essential to learn if Barbie has undergone proper rehabilitation and if she has any counselors who follow up her progress in recovery.

- What is/are the ethical problem/s in this case?

In accordance to the medical field ethics, some of the notable ethical problems include; failure to exercise truthfulness and honesty, lack of professionalism, conflict of interest due to doctor patient confidentiality and also the conflict may be due to the principle of beneficence. Failure by the physician to disclose Barbie's condition to the organ allocation organization is a defiance of the medical ethic of exercising honesty and professionalism. This creates a problem as the information limits execution of justice and denies other patients access to the limited chances to get transplants. In the medical field code of conduct, the practitioners are required to exercise a beneficence which involves actions in the best interest of their patients which involve confidentiality. From this case study the ethical problem relating to this is that the physician is bound to keep Barbie's problem a secret that is not beneficial to the general society.

- How might you resolve this case? What is the best solution and why (this is where specific ethical frameworks come into play)?

This case study shows some of the common ethical problems that medical practitioners experience in their field of work. In an effort to resolve this case a proper framework of medical ethics should be identified and be applied as a guide. One of the commonly used frameworks in resolving medical ethics problems is the four principle framework by Tom Beauchamp and James Childress. According to them the four basic moral principles that should be applied in the medical ethics are; respect for autonomy, beneficence, justice and the principle of truthfulness and honesty. In the light of the above principles, the best solution for Barbie's case would be to exercise

truthfulness and honesty for the part of the physician. The above mentioned will be the best approach in ensuring the rest of the patients waiting in line are treated justly. It also minimizes the chances of the practitioner facing legal charges due to his conduct. However, the physician will also have a duty to advise Barbie on how to change her behavior and explain why that is important as this will be in the best of her interest.

- Who else would you bring into the decision making or what other parties are needed for a satisfactory resolution?

In relation to this case, it is critical to consult with other parties on what is the best resolution for solving an ethical problem at hand. The solution will include Barbie the patient to understand her point of view and to try to explain to her the dilemma facing her fair chances of getting an organ transplant. The physician could also discuss the issue with her guardians or parents to explain to them the consequences of a failure to disclose the information concerning their daughter from the start of their relationship. The physician may also find it useful to consult with his colleagues the situation at hand as any penalties that may result from this ethical problem will also affect their careers. Proper discussions with all these people can lead to a satisfactory resolution.

Work Cited

Veatch, Robert M, Amy M. Haddad, and Robert M. Veatch. Case Studies in Pharmacy Ethics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Print.