

# Ethical issue in pharmacy

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



The ethical duty of a pharmacy is to promote a patient's best interest. However, certain obvious ethical issues will arise. Within any business involved in bulk purchasing the issue of unconscious theft will also occur. The following paper focuses on the application of ethical theories that supports as well as argues the behavior within Chaguanas Drug Mart. Chaguanas Drug Mart was established in 2008 and is no ordinary pharmacy since it provides more than your medical needs such as beautiful unusual gifts.

The store stocks a range of alternative products, including pet care items, comfortfood, household appliances, paper products, diabetic foods and a cosmetic counter. It is located on 10 Chaguanas Main Road which is a central location that conveniently attracts customers. Chaguanas Drug Mart believes its greatest asset is loyal, hard-working people who cooperate in a spirit of teamwork to help the company grow and prosper.

Ethics involves identifying, differentiating, and defending concepts of right and wrong. The following paper focuses on [1]ethical dilemmas which are also called an ethical paradox within a pharmaceutical business by focusing on the relationship between law and ethics and applying the key ethical theories which derive from normative ethical systems which are broken down into four categories which are deontological, teleological, utilitarianism and relativism.

Dilemma 1- Pharmacy technicians' and floor employees access to controlled substances The drugs prescribed by a qualified medical professional are known as prescription drugs. The explosion of prescribing and consuming

legal narcotics and controlled drugs is known as drug diversion which has become an ethical dilemma within the pharmaceutical industry. Within Chaguanas Drug Mart, taking prescription drugs without the necessary doctor's prescription has become a justifiable norm.

However, whether it is obtained initially for a legitimate medical purpose, there are ethical implications. According to Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) deontological or duty-based ethics had an interesting theory that places special emphasis on the relationship between duty and the morality of human actions. This ethical theory is applied to the issue of filling prescriptions for narcotic analgesics or pain relievers; benzodiazepines or therapeutic tranquilizers; stimulants; and barbiturates or sedatives by the technicians within Chaguanas Drug Mart as unlawful.

It is stated that prescription drug diversion involves the unlawful channelling of regulated pharmaceuticals from legal sources to the illicit marketplace, which according to the Kantian rule under categorical imperative human beings occupy a special place in creation, and morality can be summed up in one ultimate commandment of reason, or imperative, from which all duties and obligations derive such as a prescription drug may only be sold by a pharmacist when authorised by a written prescription from a medical practitioner.

Pharmacists believe they are serving mankind by issuing life-saving drugs and ensuring that people who need their products have access to them and consequentialism supports this belief. Consequentialists are the view that normative properties depend only on consequences. Therefore an ethical

analysis is only worthwhile if it ultimately leads to action and is simply a basis for making individual decisions, where the bottom line is “ to each his own. Jeremy Bentham (1789), John Stuart Mill (1861), and Henry Sidgwick (1907) indicate Act Consequentialism is the claim that an act is morally right if and only if that act maximizes the good, that is, if and only if the total amount of good for all minus the total amount of bad for all is greater than this net amount for any incompatible act available to the agent on that occasion. The issuing of prescription drugs without the doctor’s permission is a good that has outweighed the risks since most patients cannot afford another visit or are still experiencing pain after the prescription has “ run out”.

Many customers are relatives or friends of the workers and are aware that the drugs are the only source to relief but do not go to the doctor for the necessary documents since there is easy access to the items such as antibiotics. Those who work in the medical field know that protecting patient safety is the ultimate ethical principle; therefore the argument is twofold where technicians face many ethical dilemmas because the total amount of good minuses the total the amount of bad however Kantian argues that the wrong thing regardless of how justifiable is till the wrong thing.

The ethical dilemma is resolved however by placing inventory checks on all prescription drugs within the business which will manage the supply and movement of stock/Inventory. Although this may not completely solve the current issue, it will certainly limit the level of diversion. Dilemma 2- Employee monitoring in the workenvironment Employee monitoring has

emerged as a necessity and is the act of watching and monitoring employees' actions during working hours using employer equipment/property (Raposa & Mujtaba, 2003).

Within the company, employees have disregarded the term staff discount by practicing in unethical behaviour which encompasses stealing the drugstore supplies as well as time theft. Although time theft can be a more subtle form of unethical behaviour, according to Aristotle's perspective in applying moral absolutism to this dilemma, it is seen that any way you look at it, taking something that doesn't belong to you is stealing.

Moral absolutism is the ethical view that certain actions are absolutely right or wrong, regardless of other contexts such as their consequences or the intentions behind them which is also supported by Immanuel Kant's deontology. Kant's argument that to act in the morally right way, one must act from duty begins with an argument that the highest good must be intrinsically good. However, moral absolutism can be debated with relativism which is subjective and includes concepts such as utilitarianism and idealism.

Utilitarianism can be applied since it is the idea that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its outcome. Mill's (1806-1873) rule utilitarianism is much more relative in that he encourages people to do acts that are pleasurable to themselves as long as they are what he calls a "higher pleasure". Moral Absolutism versus utilitarianism is two extreme ethical approaches to reality. While they are both valid and supported by facts, they are very contrasting in their views with regards to employee monitoring in the work environment.

Most employees consider themselves a paragon of virtues - loyal, hard working and honest, however even minor pilfering from the office amounts to stealing and has become the norm, not the exception at Chaguanas Drug Mart. Most employee theft is as a result of an employee being dissatisfied with the job or circumstances within the job and this ethical dilemma could be resolved by speaking with the employees to gain awareness of job satisfaction and how to make the job more rewarding.

Many companies, because of lack of controls and a casual attitude toward employee theft, provide an inviting opportunity for an employee who has a tendency to steal. In many cases, employees, provided with a wealth of opportunities to steal, consider company property as their own. Although (Murphy, 1993) indicated that The propensity for employees to steal seems to be related to the individual's need, opportunity, skills, and attitude toward committing an illegal act, a study performed by Deloitte & Touche USA Ethics & Workplace (2007) showed there is a strong relationship between ethics and work-life balance.

In fact 91 percent of respondents stated they believe " workers are more likely to behave ethically at work when they have a work-life balance. " The moral development of individuals (Greenberg, 2002) concerning ethical maturity to choose right from wrong in ethical dilemmas was found to be inversely related to theft.

Research on employee deviant behaviour has shown that workers model their behaviours on those of their co-workers or work group members (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly 1998), and the ethical concepts applied the

importance of employer to employee communication to instill what is wrong even though it may appear to be morally right as in the case of issuing prescription drugs without a prescription which is justifiable as doing the right thing. Since employee theft is a critical problem in many organizations (Murphy, 1993), any additional understanding of its causes and correlates assists in taking action to decrease theft rates.