

I chose hospice

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Ethical issues in cancer management affiliation As a health care professional who is working in the hospice department, I usually face new influences of legal and ethical issues in my practice (Guido, 2013). Hospice programmes deal with palliative management of cases that are long term. For example, I deal with people who have cancer and end term renal diseases. The main area of concern is pain management that usually needs constant and close monitoring (Wu & Volker, 2012). However, as a nurse who manages these patients I face some ethical dilemmas in practice. The broad ethical dilemma that I face is the ability to predict and accurately define the patient prognosis and to what extent the hospice services will be of benefit to the patient. In some circumstances it may appear like declaring a death sentence to a patient yet the patient and the family members have a right to know the disease prognosis (Zieske & Abbott, 2011).

There are ethical dilemmas that affect me in my daily activities; for example, I will be concerned and may not administer morphine to a patient who always complains of pain because of the possible respiratory depression. This can lead to respiratory collapse and death, but the dilemma I will be facing is, if I should leave the patient to writhe in pain and agony. Another ethical dilemma I face in practice is, when a patient refuses to get parenteral nutritional support what should I do? It is by law that a nurse should respect patient rights while providing care, but it will be unethical to avoid giving the patient food, which helps in body function and healing (McMahon, 2011).

To overcome some of the ethical dilemmas, I usually endeavour to be well equipped with the necessary knowledge regarding the legal impacts of my actions. This provides guidance in my practice without subjecting myself into

legal jeopardy. In addition I utilise moral reasoning and development in the current milieu in solving the complex ethical issues that the I face in my daily activities as hospice providers (Williams, Shuster, Clay, & Burgio, 2010).

Understanding the jurisprudence surrounding the legal and ethical dilemmas as described by Guido (2013) is thus paramount in averting the issues during my daily practice.

Reference

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