

Code of ethics assignment

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Code of Ethics Tamara McGrath HCS 435 Robert Vella September 28, 2010

There are many health care specialties in the world, but no matter which specialty is being practiced, they all have a code of ethics. Code of ethics is a set of written guidelines that are issued by an organization or company.

These guidelines are made and set not only for organization and/or company employees, but also for the managers and/or bosses as well. These guidelines help to make a company or organization run very smooth and with little errors. I have chosen to write my paper on the Pharmacist Code of Ethics.

Pharmacists have a very important role in the health care field. Their job is to take the prescriptions from patients and doctors, who can call in prescriptions, and gather the medication in the right amount and correct dosage. Then the pharmacist must dispense the proper medication to the correct patient. The Pharmacist Code of Ethics spells out moral, ethical and social obligations. There are eight principles to the Pharmacist Code of Ethics which deal with autonomy and dignity, beneficence, competence, the covenantal relationship with patients, honesty and integrity, interaction with colleagues, justice and obligations.

The first principle is that “ a pharmacist respects the covenantal relationship between the patient and pharmacist” (American Pharmacists Association).

What this means is that the pharmacist has moral obligations to the society to gain their trust. The patients that fill their prescriptions at any pharmacy are putting their trust in the pharmacist that they will give them the correct medication and the correct amount and dosage of the medication. The

second principle is that “ a pharmacist promotes the good of every patient in

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a caring, compassionate, and confidential manner” (American Pharmacists Association).

This means that the pharmacist must take of the patients in a private and confidential manner. Also, the pharmacist thinks of the patients needs by caring about the well being of the patients. The third principle of the Pharmacist Code of Ethics is “ a pharmacist respects the autonomy and dignity of each patient” (American Pharmacists Association). This means that the pharmacist has open communication with the patients by making them a part of their decision making about their health. This also means that the pharmacist is respectful to all patients, despite their color, gender, age, and race, etc. A pharmacist acts with honesty and integrity in professional relationships” (American Pharmacists Association). This is fourth on the list of principles for the Pharmacist Code of Ethics. This principle says that the pharmacist shall remain truthful with the patients and that the pharmacist avoids discriminatory practices, behavior or work conditions. Number five on the Pharmacist Code of Ethics is that “ a pharmacist maintains professional competence” (American Pharmacists Association). It is a pharmacist’s duty to keep up on new medications, devices and technology that may become available to help with health care.

This will make sure that the patients will receive the best care and the best medications needed. The sixth principle is that “ a pharmacist respects the values and abilities of colleagues and other health professionals” (American Pharmacists Association). The pharmacist’s needs to be aware that other colleagues may have a different opinion as to what medications should be given out to whom. For example, a mother comes into pick up a prescription

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for her son, the medication being picked up requires her son to pick it up because it is a narcotic and he is of age.

One pharmacist may think that it is okay to just let the mother pick up the prescription because this is for her son, while another pharmacist may be firm on the fact that the son has to pick up the prescription himself. The pharmacists need to respect the fact that they have different opinions on the situation, however, they need to think of the patient first and come to some sort of compromise or agreement. The seventh principle is that “ a pharmacist individual, community and societal needs” (American Pharmacists Association). “ The primary obligation of a pharmacist is to individual patients.

However, the obligations of a pharmacist may at times extend beyond the individual to the community and society. In these situations, the pharmacist recognizes the responsibilities that accompany these obligations and acts accordingly” (U. S. Pharm D). The eighth and final principal of the Pharmacist Code of Ethics is that “ a pharmacist seeks justice in the distribution of health resources” (American Pharmacists Association). “ When health resources are allocated, a pharmacist is fair and equitable, balancing the needs of patients and society” (U. S. Pharm D).

I think that this code of ethics is a good one to work by and I also think that it is pretty simple to enforce. A lot of these principles in the Pharmacist Code of Ethics are common sense things to remember. For example, when working with the public in a health care field, it is common knowledge to know that what is said and done between a patient and the medical provider is

confidential and private. This information cannot just be shared with anyone who is standing around, only the patient and the pharmacist, in this case, can discuss the patients' treatments and/or medication.

Respecting colleagues should be a given for any person at any job. However, in the health care field, there are going to be many medical professionals who do not agree with others. These professionals must work together and put the patient's needs first and come to some sort of agreement in the end. Working together as a team, instead of working against each other, will get things done in the proper ways. The only recommendation that I would have to strengthen the fifth principle would be to make classes on new medications, devices and technology a requirement.

This principle states that the pharmacist has a duty to be up to date with all of the current and new medications, devices and technology. However, there is nothing stating that they have to have this knowledge. In my opinion, it would be better to have this mandated so that there are no mistakes made because of a pharmacist having a lack of knowledge on a new medication or technological device that could benefit a patient greatly. In conclusion, the code of ethics is set in place for organizations and companies to follow to make sure that these places are being run properly.

If medical facilities are not being run properly, who will suffer in the long run? The patients will be the ones to suffer because of this. For example, if there was not Pharmacist Code of Ethics, then pharmacists would be able to disregard any other co-workers opinions and could possibly be giving out the wrong medication to the wrong people. This could cause serious problems all

around. These codes are set in place for a reason, and that reason is to keep order and stability in these companies and organizations. References

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