

PHI 413V Topic 5 Patient/s Spiritual Needs: Case Analysis

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Question One

Healthcare providers should allow their patients to exercise autonomy and make their own decisions regarding their health. However, it is an ethical dilemma to allow a patient to continue making the wrong decision, knowing that the decision may cause more harm to the patient (Walker, 2020). Similarly, in this case analysis, it may seem like disrespect for patient autonomy. However, it is hard for the physician to allow Mike to continue making decisions that, to him, maybe irrational and may harm the patient. For instance, when the doctor allowed Mike and Joan to try a miracle healing service rather than temporary dialysis, they returned two days later with their son's condition deteriorating. The doctor had allowed them to exercise autonomy, but their decision had caused more harm to the patient since he now requires regular dialysis and a kidney transplant.

Despite respecting patient autonomy, I believe patient safety comes before other spiritual and religious beliefs that may influence patients' decisions. The physician should try to make Mike and Joanne understand that the decision to wait for a miracle may cause more harm to James. In light of the Christian worldview, God is a God of Miracles, and there is nothing He cannot do. Also, Christians should believe that God can help them out even in life and death. However, the physician should influence Mike to allow James to undergo treatment as they wait for the miracle. Thus, reducing James' suffering and ensuring safety.

Question Two

Ethical principles of beneficence and nonmaleficence are essential considerations in this case analysis. Beneficence means that the decisions should be made to benefit all parties. On the other hand, nonmaleficence implies that the decision should not cause harm. In light of the

Christian worldview, the Christian should think of health as a precious gift that shows God's love for a person. They should think of illnesses and sickness as a form of suffering, which may have or have not been caused by sin. However, God gives people strength, peace, and calmness in times of trouble brought by sickness. God may use sicknesses to call people to repent their sins and draw them back closer to him. Among God's names is Jehovah Rapha, meaning the healer. Thus, God heals and does not like seeing Christians suffering from illnesses.

A Christian should consider medical interventions God's gift to heal their disease. God gives people the skills and knowledge to become physicians. Thus, a Christian should honor them and seek medical help when ill. More so, even when Christ was performing healing miracles, he would take some actions: for example, when He used mud to open the blind man's eyes. More so, when considered in their specialties, Jesus' healing ministry ranged from dermatology, healing skin disease to critical care, and healing the centurion's servant who was about to die (McTavish, 2018). Thus, Christians should appreciate medical interventions and take action while waiting for healing miracles.

Based on the understanding of the Christian worldview, as a Christian, Mike should allow his son to get the required medical attention as advised by the physician. Blindly waiting for a miracle to happen without taking action might cause more harm to his son. More so, if he decides to have faith and wait for a miracle, and an irreversible consequence such as death happens, he might end up blaming God since he put all his faith in Him. Thus, he should honor the physician by taking his advice and allowing his son to undergo dialysis and a kidney transplant, as he prays and believes in God for total healing.

To truly honor the beneficence and nonmaleficence ethical principles, Mike should ensure that the decision benefits James' health and does not cause more harm. Therefore, he

should reason that allowing James to get treatment will benefit both of them and help him reduce his suffering since it will save James' life and improve his quality of life. In addition, he should appreciate that faith without action is dead. According to MacTavish (2018), Christians should take action regarding their health while having faith and asking God to deliver them from illness and suffering. Thus, while trusting God for a miracle, he should take action to allow James to get medical attention. He should believe and trust God for healing while his son undergoes treatment.

Question Three

Spiritual needs are an individual's expectations, helping them find meaning, purpose, and value in their life. A spiritual needs assessment is a dialogue held by a doctor and a patient aimed at helping the doctor identify the patient's spiritual needs, diagnose the unmet needs, and, therefore, develop care plans to address the unmet needs. Marx (2018) states that a spiritual needs assessment helps the physician identify a patient's spiritual preferences, thus incorporating the preferences and precepts of the patient's traditions and faiths into the treatment plans. Spiritual needs assessment and addressing a patient's spiritual needs also ensure the provision of high-quality and supportive care, thus enhancing patient satisfaction (Astrow et al., 2018).

A spiritual needs assessment would help the physician assist Mike in determining the appropriate intervention for James and his family or other people involved in his care by understanding their beliefs, values, their understanding of life and thus develop plans that address them. Spirituality plays a significant role in one's illness. It impacts health behavior and decisions, adherence to medication, and patients' participation in health and treatment actions. By understanding the patient's beliefs, values, and perceptions of health based on religion, the physician can plan on influencing the patient's decision to ensure that it does not cause harm but

considers their spiritual needs. For instance, a spiritual needs assessment on Mike would help him understand his values, beliefs, and perceptions, thus influencing him to make a decision that will support his needs and still not cause harm to his son.

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