

Human Philosophies and Ethics

Scenario 1:

The police bring a man from the airport customs to an emergency department and request that the doctor do the appropriate examinations to determine if the man is trafficking in cocaine. The police suspect he has swallowed the drugs in condoms. The patient does not give consent for the examinations.

1. What category of patient's rights does this scenario fall into? Why?

Consent to medical treatment
Patient has the right to refuse

2. What should the doctor's next course of action be taking into consideration autonomy, beneficence and maleficence, and justice?

Beneficence/Nonmaleficence
= Dr. should explain risks (condom rupturing internally)
+ what could be grave consequences
Autonomy = respect patient's decision
Justice = right's based
- police cannot force Dr. as patient rights must be upheld

Scenario 2:

A 59-year-old concert violinist is diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome, a painful condition of the hand and fingers caused by compression of a major nerve at the front of the wrist. The doctor suggests a delicate surgery to remove the pressure on the nerve in his wrist. The violinist asks for a week to make his decision as he would like to make an appointment with a wrist specialist to confirm what is causing his wrist pain.

1. What category of patient's rights does this scenario fall into? Why?

Access
- Patient has the right to a second opinion

2. What should the doctor's next course of action be taking into consideration autonomy, beneficence and maleficence, and justice?

Autonomy = respect patient's decision
Beneficence/Nonmaleficence
= explain procedure + risks
= suggest surgeon for 2nd opinion
Justice = right's based

Scenario 3:

Ann, who is eight years old, presents with excessive thirst, large amounts of urine, increased appetite, and weight loss over the past two months. The doctor diagnoses Type 1 diabetes based on her blood glucose levels.

Ann requires insulin therapy; however her parents refuse, believing she can be managed with diet and a new herbal remedy they have read about.

1. What category of patient's rights does this scenario fall into? Why?

Consent to Medical Treatment

Parents have the right to refuse treatment on the girl's behalf as she is a minor

2. What should the doctor's next course of action be taking into consideration autonomy, beneficence and maleficence, and justice?

Beneficence / Nonmaleficence

- Explain possible consequences
- suggest counselling

Autonomy = ultimately respect parent's decision

Justice = rights based (patient)
= legal (report to court)

Scenario 4:

A patient is diagnosed with HIV. The HIV is still in the early stages, so the doctor has provided him with an extensive counselling session on the long-term effects of this disease on his health, as well as provided him with a prescription for "atrilpa," and a list of all of the potential side effects of the drug. The patient is a teacher and has asked that his diagnosis remain a secret.

1. What category of patient's rights does this scenario fall into? Why?

Privacy = Dr. is required to keep medical info confidential.

2. What should the doctor's next course of action be taking into consideration autonomy, beneficence and maleficence, and justice?

Autonomy = respect patient's wishes

NonMaleficence / Beneficence

= stress importance of precautions with contact

Rights Based Justice

= Patient rights are to be upheld

- no legal requirement to report diagnosis.