Healthcare Professionalism Regulation and Patient Rights

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Part 1

Review Fig. 1 on p. 6 of the Medical Professionalism article. Select two outcomes that are important to you (or that you want to achieve in your professional career) and explain how to develop those abilities.

Undoubtedly, the development of a professional career needs immense attention towards betterment. In this regard, the outcome that I wish to develop is a connection with patients at their level concerning the human aspect. For anyone involved in the healthcare profession, whether as a doctor or a healthcare administrator, a crucial lesson is to feel the patient perspective in the hour of pain, need, and disturbance. All the formalities like insurance payments, form filling, admitting over the approval, and waiting for test results have nothing to do with a patient's concerns when the patient needs immediate healthcare. The level of anxiety, discomfort, uncertainty, and distress in the eyes of the patient is above these formalities. It does not mean that healthcare does not entertain or complete these formalities, but patient care should be the priority (Moniz et al., 2021). In other words, connection to patients should prevail over business approaches, and I wish to develop this outcome in my professional career.

Similarly, another outcome that is important for me is to overcome my misunderstandings, misconceptions, personal assumptions, biases, and prejudices. These can only be relinquished by bringing awareness to eliminate cultural, religious, ethnic, or community-based biases. I wish to continue extensive communication with colleagues, patients, attendants, and coworkers to gain awareness and overcome these biases or personal assumptions that have developed over time in my personality.

Part 2

What are the implications of differences across states' policies around scope of practice in the health sector? For regulation? For consumers? For practitioners?

Scope of practice mainly deals with the variety of services a healthcare system provides in its capacity. Professional competency revolves around the training to provide such services in the field. However, the legal scope in this context is specific to the state concerning regulations by which professionals provide respective services as a responsibility. In other words, the licensure and regulations currently fall under the umbrella of the state, i.e., doctors, physicians, pharmacists, or nurses, etc. In this way, the main implications concerning laws and regulations have limitations in the effective delivery of healthcare services. It is because professional competence and legal scope across states lack uniformity and are mostly mismatched (Boehnke et al., 2019).

Similarly, the application of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) mainly focuses on consumer masses by transforming the healthcare system in the country. Due to its scope, the population's health issues are effectively catered to by the expansion of high-quality and cost-effective health services. The consumer population is increasing daily, and more pressure lies on healthcare units to facilitate the population chunk with quality services. Meanwhile, ACA implementation needs an innovative system where proficient practitioners work in teams, and some of the respective roles may overlap. Such effective care enables practitioners to practice their entire ability and potential to meet the needs of consumers efficiently.

Part 3

How did the Lacks family, the media, and the general population view the medical community during the 1950s?

During the 1950s, the country's general population and the media looked at the medical community with wary eyes. So Lacks's family and the masses felt reluctant, anxious, and worried while visiting the medical staff due to their ignorance. The basic custom was to visit any doctor in an acute critical condition or after suffering from sickness for a long time. A massive chunk of the population, like Lacks's family, could not afford a physician, so people tended to move towards charity hospitals like in the case of Henrietta. She had cervical cancer, and her cervical tissues were collected when she approached Hopkins Hospital. It was the usual standard of treatment at that time (Karabağ, 2020).

What is the Nuremberg Code? How was it used, and was it easily enforced? Why or why not?

The Nuremberg Code relates to a holistic approach towards research ethics in the case of human experimentation in the mid-twentieth century. The trials were developed in lieu of World War II, and this code was used for conducting experimentation by medical teams. Usually, it is the accumulation of ten principles used for the code of conduct to execute research on an ethical basis. However, its use was not easily enforced; instead, various coercive means were used in this regard. The main difficulty in its enforcement arose because it had no legal basis like other policies or regulations. Having no legal binding, it had no legal basis for enforcement.

Part 4

Do laws and regulations protect patients, or do health professionals protect patients?

Laws and regulations are the sole entities protecting patients, but health professionals also have immense significance in this regard. The actions of healthcare providers are directly dependent upon the rules and regulations by which they abide to protect patients. So, laws and regulations have the peculiar feature of protecting the patient by binding healthcare professionals to protect the patient community (Zandesh, et al., 2019). For example, the current laws relating to sharing of information bind professionals to share information with those who assist in treating and caring for patients. But these laws also prohibit sharing of information with those persons who are not entitled to patient care.

Thinking about laws and regulations, how would the events that led to the discovery and experimentation with HeLa cells have been different if they occurred today?

According to my viewpoint, the laws and regulations which are presently in effect would have had an impact in the past. This way, the discovery of HeLa cells would have been addressed more ethically, with transparency and proper information-sharing channels. The current laws would actively address patients' treatment options in the 1950s and would not hinder the research options for professionals. In other words, the discovery of these cells would have occurred in a smoother and more transparent way to boost research aspects.

Part 5

Christoph Lengauer makes an analogy stating that cells should be treated with the same value as oil. He states, “Why not treat valuable cells like oil? When you find oil on somebody’s property, it doesn’t automatically belong to them, but they do get a portion of the profits.” (p. 267). Do you agree with Lengauer’s analogy? Why or why not?

For the purpose of research, I agree with Lengauer’s analogy because the analogy breeds a sense of research for those who are dedicated to it by losing sight of other matters and focusing more on discovering new things. So, the justification of the process does not matter much, but one should value the medical community to the possible extent. In addition, the consent factor on the part of scientists is also important to satisfy moral and ethical grounds. However, focusing on the discoveries owes its preference to the analogy instead of indulging in severe issues (Vosniadou & Skopeliti, 2019).

Think about some of the interactions that occurred throughout the book. What examples can you find that would now be prohibited by the laws, statutes, and acts covered this week?

The issue of data publication concerning HeLa cells looks like a violation of privacy laws. The violation of the patient’s privacy and the privacy of the concerned family is a massive breach of law. And such malfunctioning concerning genetic makeup would result in heavy penalties. Similarly, CRISPR announces that involvement in research to change genetic makeup to make individuals more resistant to diseases is beyond thinking because it has created numerous complications that lead to massive patient privacy and safety issues. So, it looks somewhat interesting to discuss how the HeLa cells case would be portrayed with massive fines, lawsuits, violations, and moral backlashes. So, concerning privacy issues, such scenarios can be imagined today.

Part 6

Select two points that the author makes that you may agree or disagree with and explain why.

In “Thirteen Ways of Looking at Henrietta Lacks”, the author has evaluated multiple perspectives in various ways. One such point that catches attention is the discussion about the intentions of Rebecca Skloot. The author depicts Skloot’s extraordinary journey as starting exploitatively in terms of multiple discoveries the scientists made half a century ago. I am afraid I have to disagree with the statement as she was already getting benefits from book sales. So, her intentions and actions would not be exploitative like the doctors or experts working at Hopkins University. Additionally, her life was full of ups and downs, accompanied by research-based studies that showered hope on her. And it eventually made her sincere and genuine concerning her writing, especially writing that covered science, ethical sense, and healthcare access.

Similarly, another point relates to the lousy treatment of Henrietta Lacks due to her black color. I cannot entirely agree with the point because clinical patients were treated alike in the mid-twentieth century. Such confusion is rooted in experimentation-based treatment, where scientists and doctors were exploring new medical horizons by prescribing toxic doses to patients without their will (Batelaan, 2021). Even babies and patients with severe conditions were experimentally treated. So, Mrs. Lacks was treated like whites at the clinic without discrimination.

References

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