Situation Ethics: Ethical Dilemma And Ethical Decision Making

Introduction:

The case study that is under consideration of person named John who is a 36 years old man. John has quite a length history of heroine usage. Because of his addiction. He wasn't able to save money for himself and was not able to pay for his basic needs as he spent most of what he had in the consumption of drugs. He had to shift to homeless shelter where he is working as well, it's been a month since he is been working in the shelter. Because of his habit of being addicted to drugs, he thinks that life is not worth living anymore, he has developed negative perception towards life, and believes he can no more handle the situation and live like this. He also thinks that his life is of no importance and no one will be missing him, this makes him sad and develop negative emotions towards living. After having a conversation with John, it was also disclosed that he was planning to end his life and thinks that his life is worthless.

Ethical Dilemma:

This case study is required to be analyzed properly, John is at the stage in his life that he thinks that everything around him is worthless and considers himself to be no more useful which resulted in having negative emotions towards life. The ethical dilemma here is that if consultant should let others know about patient's situation and patient's interest in committing suicide without his consent. (Beauhamp & Walters 2001) defines ethical dilemma as situation that usually occurs when a person's decision is made based on mutual exclusiveness. According to (Chally & Loric, pp. 18-20), an ethical dilemma occurs when a moral problem that involves more than one mutually correct or mutually exclusive actions. This means that I being a consultant am required to respect the patient's decision and keep his information private. However, this may also result in risking patient's life, if proper healthcare intervention does not take place (Adachi, 2014). Healthcare intervention will allow the monitoring of the patient and prevent and avoid suicide, but this can case violation in the patient's confidentiality which will also not be acceptable for the patient. This situation needs to be analyzed carefully, as after accessing the conversation with the patient, it is evident that that he is planning to commit suicide and if the situation is not handled properly, it could end up producing consequences that will be severe (Adachi, 2014). There is need of having a moralistic perspective and the patient needs to be encouraged to look for positives in life. John needs to have a perspective in life, some purpose, so that he does not feel unimportant and less worthy than others. The only thing that is keeping him from living a normal and happy life is that he considers that his habit of heroine makes him very less likable towards other people and makes him worthless (Jie 2015, pp. 410-411).

The relationship between ethical principals and ethical dilemmas has been defined as the logical incompatibility between the principles that can result in causing ethical dilemma (Johnson, 2009).

Ethical Theory

The ethical theory introduces clarity as well as provides precisions in arguments while remaining in the domain of morality. There is normative ethics which involves virtue ethics, deontology as well as consequentialism (Peterson, 2018), which focuses on the basis of actions.In addition, virtue ethics should also be considered, this mean each society has different set of opinions, this also has a huge impact on John's personality, he thinks that the society will not accept him as he is and he is not productive enough for the society. utilitarianism is also involved, which means that I need to be considerate of what I am doing and whatever I do should produce greatest possible outcome.

The ethical theory that can be applied in this case study is the normative theory, which indicates It is the patient's right that his information remains confidential (Hurka, 2011). On the other hand, it is my duty to make sure that my patient does not harm himself in any way. In this case study, John needs help in recognizing his worth and realizing how important he is towards the society and what good he can bring to the society to make it better which will eventually make him feel better about himself. John needs to leave his habit of taking heroine and for this, he needs to be motivated continuously. A big factor that contributes towards John's negative thinking towards life is that he thinks that the society will no more accept him. He needs to be encouraged that he can become a better person and the society will accept him, he needs to take his life more seriously and start living in a healthy way.

In addition, there should be duty of care involved while dealing with such patients. This means that there is a need of obligation that is recognized by the law that will help in avoiding the risk of causing danger to others (Law Handbook, 2019). This means that I need to take care of the patient and make sure that he does not harm himself in any way. In case of John, the chances of him to cause harm to himself is forseeable, as the patient has stated some things about his life that lead me to believe that he is may cause himself physical harm. The client is at risk of committing suicide. There are ethical as well as legal obligations to break confidentiality only when it is evident that the client will harm himself. There are consequences of having poor boundaries, these make clients feel betrayed or abandoned. The person getting treated may get emotionally traumatized and may put himself into danger (Wassom, 2015, pp. 300-302). To avoid this, I aim to work with the patient in a more friendly way so that he does not feel alone.

Privacy and confidentiality of John needs to be kept within the bounds of the professional relationship. A legal requirement needs to be set, there are privacy acts as well as legislations that need to be kept in mind while communicating with the client. As in this case study, there is a chance of patient to cause harm to himself, he needs to be counselled so that he starts to see the positive things in life and motivate him to come over his drug addiction. The root cause of John feeling himself to be worthless is his addiction to drugs. I being a consultant aim to encourage and motivate John to start living his life and try to leave heroine and start seeing the good things that are happening around him.

Ethical Decision Making:

In this case study, different ethical principles are considered which include utilitarian theory, consequentialism (Peterson 2018, pp. 60-62) that are part of normative ethics theory, which indicate that it would not be ethical to disclose a patient's information without his consent, there is consequentialism that states that there may be consequences if the consultant discloses the patient's information without his consent, that will not result in a good outcome, and the patient

might lose patient in me. Being a consultant, my main focus will be on developing trust and faith between me and my patient so that he feels safe and comfortable while sharing his details. There is also utilitarianism involved, which means that I need to be considerate of what I am doing and whatever I do should produce greatest possible outcome.

Conclusion:

The patient that has been discussed in the case study has a lengthy history of heroine consumption. He is quite depressed and has also disclosed that he is planning to end his life soon. He requires that his information should be kept confidential. He feels that all of this is too much for him to handle and believes there is no place for him here. Being a consultant, I aim to develop more trust and faith and make him feel more comfortable in sharing his thoughts. I must keep his information private and confidential and motivate him to see the better things in life. He lacks hope. I aim to work closely with him so that I understand his behavior more and improve it so that he starts seeing life in a better way.

References:

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