Ethical issues can be analyzed by various frameworks and moral issues are analyzed whether a particular course of action is morally right and wrong. Confidentiality and veracity are ethical concerns for health care providers (HCP). This article explores the ethical dilemma related to HCP and an infertile couple. Modern biotechnology raises ethical issues that need to be carefully considered because they can affect human health, wellbeing, society and our environment. If HCP maintain the confidentiality, on the other hand, will breach the principle of veracity, so in this scenario, truthfulness would be at the top priority.

**Keywords:** Health care provider, Confidentiality, Veracity, Dilemma, Ethics, unethical, Decision making

**ABSTRACT**

Ethical issues can be analyzed by various frameworks and moral issues are analyzed whether a particular course of action is morally right and wrong. Confidentiality and veracity are ethical concerns for health care providers (HCP). This article explores the ethical dilemma related to HCP and an infertile couple. Modern biotechnology raises ethical issues that need to be carefully considered because they can affect human health, wellbeing, society and our environment. If HCP maintain the confidentiality, on the other hand, will breach the principle of veracity, so in this scenario, truthfulness would be at the top priority.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Confidentially is one of the fundamental principles of HCP ethics *(Townsend et al., 2015).* According the HCP code of ethics, HCP are bound by duty to confidentiality *(Griffith et al., 2017).* Yet, there are times when sharing information is important as it will be in the best interest of the patient and the family. Client self-sufficiency needs as persons should be able to select when the authority allows them to understand the evidence for their wellness. To share information with the HCP by the patient is sometimes difficult because of trustworthy and confidentiality, as confidentiality is critical for the patient to trust provider. Only if there are strong reasons approving disclosure to prevent danger to clients and others. A couple presented in a fertility clinic for the treatment of infertility, although they had the same interest regarding information related to fertility treatment. But another principle is arising in this case which is justice because false hope was given to husband by HCP.

**SCENARIO**

A young couple visited the HCP for treatment of infertility. HCP advised them baseline investigations. During the ultrasound of a patient, HCP found that she had no uterus in abdomen. Upon asking, patient told the HCP that before marriage, she develops stage 1 endometrial cancer for which she underwent hysterectomy. She requested to hold this information as it will spoil her marital life. When her husband came in HCP’s office and asked for treatment plan, HCP told him that every thing is fine; he recommended some multivitamins to the couple. The ethical principles clashing in this scenario are confidentiality which arise from patient and veracity from the HCP. But another principle is arising in this case which is justice because false hope was given to husband by HCP.
proof of the delivery of facilities of health care (Walker, 1996).

**From the Lens of the Health Care Provider**

Open analysis, certain points related to ethical principles come upfront and many questions arise. Like, a HCP is always supposed to keep the confidentiality of the patient but at the same time, a HCP is also supposed to practice principles of veracity by telling the truth. A dilemma related to this situation is that if HCP share the correct information with the husband then it would breach the principle of confidentiality and if not share, then it would breaches the principle of veracity. This is the condition which HCP in Asia, frequently face this problem and catering according to their own understanding which sometimes creates problems in different contexts (Kwan, 2003). HCP have an ethical obligation to maintain confidentiality when client's wife discloses personal and serious information. Application of decision and actions don't depend on someone's wishes or gut reaction it must be based on code of ethics. HCP here, was carrying two principles on both shoulders at one side she/he was concerned about confidentiality while on the other side she/he was violating the veracity by hiding the correct information for husband. HCP while dealing such situation should remind that they are given a pledge which says, “I will practice my profession faithfully. I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the stander of my profession and will hold in confidence all personal matter that is committed to my keeping “Therefore the personal matters will hold in confidence’(Yaqoob, 2017).

Likewise, the decision of HCP should be to counsel the patient to share the truth with her husband. Because, as a common rule honesty is the best policy to avoid further problems in life. By sharing truth with the husband, it was quite possible that he would accept with the truth instead of being aware of such matter in the latter life, where he could be able to not accept it behavioral (Prem, 2012). Despite of introduction of World Health organization for pain management two decades back cancer pain is still being a major practice in clinical area (Salminen, 2008).

**From the Lens of Patient**

Patients have many rights related to their health and one of them is the right of confidently to prevent negative decision in the family. Sometimes taking this confidentiality is an obligation and they try not to breach of confidentiality by mutual discussion and proper counseling. If we analyze, patient might be under stress due to the truth related to her infertility. She might be assuring the fear of separation at that time because of hysterectomy. If HCP revealed the truth to her husband that she might be facing trouble in her social and personal life. According to study (Naseem et al., 2014). Almost half of the cases were reported as sexual dysfunction which later on cause same degree of deterioration in their marriage and feeling of guiltiness which particularly was concerned with hysterectomy.

**From the Lens of Patient' Husband**

It was the husband's right to get true information about her wife's cause of infertility because, it is against the ethics to give him untruth information. Here, the principle of veracity is violated. The basic moral rule is telling the truth and it has a major ethical concern in health. HCP expected to provide information with an honest, value-free description diagnosis, treatment options and its potential outcomes. The HCP should provide the facts. In medical ethics truth telling involves the moral duty
to be honest with patients diagnosis, conditions, medications, procedures, and risks although they sometimes appear unpleasant, but it is very important.

**Justification of My Position**

My viewpoint is strongly in the favor of husband. Because, in ethics of Islam we are directed to avoid telling a lie because, we are living in Muslim country and the message of Islam contains truth, here the question arises that what is truth for a layman; truth means the real position, the real situation and this is marked by true words. Here true words mean, words generally understood in a sense by a given society. Truth means something which stands firm in the eyes of everybody. Truth means the quality or state of being true (Kwan, 2013). It means that truth is something which is permanent, which is not hidden, which is based on facts, which needs no support as being truth. So truth enjoys many dimensions.

In a society one needs a social status to survive. A status demands sometimes the majority of your clan, sometimes wealth, sometimes land, sometimes a unique skill and sometimes a rare feather of character. In the society of desert which was covered with ignorance, the status of SAADIQ and AMEEN for our Holy prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) displays how well the truth full personality in the eyes of society. In our scenario, wife is infertile due to hysterectomy and she cannot conceive in her life. In this case disclosure should be encouraged strongly between couple

**Possible Consequences**

This dilemma occurred between multiple principles of ethics. One is from the side of husband in terms of justice and second is from the HCP in terms of husband’s right (confidentiality). While third is from the HCP who violated veracity. If a HCP does not disclose the facts with the husband then it can be a serious offence for his wife because of the fact. Although wife has fear of separation from her husband, but it will be more serious issue when husband would come to know from any other HCP. If wife was honest with her husband, it might possible they could have adopted the child and lived happy life.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

In 1960s many HCP believed that correct information for patient would be horrible truth than telling a lie. Therefore, this behavior promoted a large amount of distrust among HCP and patient. Modern ethics strongly force on honesty and openness so it is not as easy as it sounds. Honesty is still preferred but there is one situation where it is considered acceptable to not be fully truthful. The health care provider may withhold some evidence; they truly believe that complete truthfulness will cause a big harm to patient this ethical right called therapeutic privilege. An example of this: a fear of suicide in patients suffering from depression.

**CONCLUSION**

The practice of telling the truth is a principle of veracity. In this scenario the health care providers have the responsibility, to tell the truth because truthfulness is the cornerstone of respect that exists in therapeutic relationship. The cause of infertility can be disclosed for the prevention of further disputes.

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