

Critical Decision Making

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Mike Case Study

This paper focuses on the case study of Mike who works as a Lab Technician at a local hospital. However, Mike has been warned about his reporting to work late and his supervisor has even informed him that he might have his contract terminated if he continued to be late for work. Unfortunately on his way to work a few days after he has been warned about his lateness, Mike finds that there is a spill on the lobby and even though he was aware that the spill might be dangerous, he felt that he had to assume that he did not see the spill so that he can be able to report to work on time and save his job. Nevertheless, later on when going about his duties, he realizes that a lady fell down in the lobby and injured herself. Thus, this paper focuses on the topic of critical decision making and specifically discusses the consequences of Mike's failure to report, the impacts that Mike's decision had in the safety of patients, on the risks for litigation, on the quality metrics of the organization and on the workload of other hospital departments and how Mike's manager should address the issue with Mike in order to ensure that he does not repeat the same mistake again.

Consequences of Mike's failure to report

From the onset, it is important to point out for any individual who works in the health care sector, the individual has to be familiar with the concept of critical decision making since as noted by Lewenson and Truglio-Londrigan (2008) and Lipe and Beasley (2004) the decision that one makes when working in the health care sector can have major impacts both in case of the health care organization as well as in case of the individual who is receiving the health care provided by the organization. For example, when wrong diagnosis is given to a patient, the patient might have the condition that he/she is suffering from deteriorating and eventually lose

his/her life due to wrong diagnosis. On the other critical thinking as has been highlighted by Criticalthinking.org (2013), critical thinking is “self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, self-corrective thinking, and its assumptions subscribe to values of excellence and give careful thought before making a decision” (p.2).

In that view, as a health professional, Mike should have used a critical decision making approach when contemplating if to first stop reporting to work and address the issue with the spill or whether to assume the issue and report to work. However, from the case study, it is apparent that Mike put his job first as he did not contemplate what might happen if someone else stepped on the spill. Thus, from Mike’s failure to report the spill, the following can be explained to be the consequences:

- a) The injury that was suffered by the lady who was convinced that hospitals were safe place only to be surprised when she found that was not the case in real sense
- b) Mike felt guilty of the decision that he made and that definitely affected his work performance for a few days
- c) There might have been other patients around who saw the woman fall and injure herself and that must have affected the confidence or trust that the patients had with the hospital

Impact that Mike’s decision had on patient safety, on the risk for litigation, on the organization's quality metrics, and on the workload of other hospital department

From the case study, it is obvious that the irresponsible decision that Mike made to assume the spill and ensure that he reported to work on time had devastating impacts to various stakeholders.

To begin with, the patient who fell down due to the spill suffered a hip injury that could be a life changing injury. Indeed, the fact that the lady fell unexpectedly implies that she had a serious hip injury that was mainly due to the assumptions that were made by Mike.

On the other hand, the fact that the lady understood that she fell from a spill that was on the floor meant that there is a chance that she was going to litigate and demand compensation from the hospital. If the case would be decided on her favor and there is a high chance that might be the case, then the hospital would have to pay her a lot of money depending on the nature of the injuries suffered and the extent to which the injury suffered affected her normal life.

Apart from that, the fact that there is a high chance that the issue would be publicized particularly if the lady litigates implies that the hospital will be covered in negative light and that can in the long run have devastating impacts to the operations of the hospital as people will no longer have trust with the services offered by the hospital. Indeed, the incident implies that the hospital's safety metrics will decrease as the injury sustained by the lady was caused by negligence and will have negative impact to the prospects of the hospital since as discussed by Pronovost (2014), majority of patients are likely to prefer been treated at a hospital with high record of patient safety.

In case of the workload to other hospital department, the workload will definitely be increased since the hospital has to carry out a root cause analysis that will take a lot of time and efforts in order to ensure that the organization gets to understand what caused the spill so that another spill in the future is avoided. Moreover, the lady has to be treated at the hospital and that implies that radiology and physical therapy departments have to be involved. In addition to that, the injured lady will also require bedside nurses, and even an extra bed and all those requirements will result to increased costs that have to be catered for by the hospital.

Actions by Mike's Manager

From the case study, it is clear that the predicament that Mike and the entire hospital is experiencing emanates from the fact that there lacks critical decision making process when it comes to making of some decision. Thus, it is important that Mike's manager counseled specifically in context of critical decision making so that it becomes clear to him that safety comes first. In addition, the manager should also issue Mike with a warning so that he is aware of the fact that if he was to repeat the same mistakes again, his contract would be terminated.

References

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