**NUR 6521 Week 1 Assignment**

Student Full Name

Institution Affiliation

Course Full Title

Instructor Full Name

Due Date

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Healthcare professionals operate under intense regulatory scrutiny, considering the ethical and professional standards that underpin nursing practices. According to Varkey (2021), care providers have overarching obligations to benefit patients, avert harm, guarantee patient autonomy, and ensure justice and fairness when delivering care. States in the US have functional policies and regulations that influence the scope of practice for nurse practitioners (NPs), including the prescriptive authority, licensure requirements, and involvement in multiple nursing practices. These regulations and policies affect healthcare professionals' ability to comply with professional and ethical standards when engaging in nursing practices, including medication prescription, patient assessment, and treatment management. This paper discusses ethical and legal implications, strategies to address disclosure and nondisclosure, approaches to guide clinical decisions, and the process of writing prescriptions in JJ's case scenario.

**Ethical and Legal Implications in the Case Study**

In the case scenario, the prescriber, pharmacist, and patient's family are the primary stakeholders in safeguarding JJ's safety. Firstly, the prescriber and pharmacist are responsible for preventing the possible harm emanating from prescribing asthma medications that are not yet approved by the FDA. As a result, they should collaborate in evaluating the benefits of the new drug against the potential adverse side effects. Other factors to consider when deciding to prescribe a new drug are availability, allergies, and the need for monitoring. Secondly, the patient and the patient's family have the right to information, meaning that healthcare professionals should obtain written consent and share information regarding the new drug and care processes. The failure to evaluate the benefits versus the risks of prescribing the new medication for asthma, as well as the decision to prescribe the new drug without enlightening the patient and family members can violate various bioethical principles, including autonomy, justice, beneficence, and non-maleficence. From a legal dimension, violating bioethical principles attracts regulatory implications and consequences, including lawsuits against the hospital, the prescriber, and the pharmacist.

**Strategies to Address Disclosure and Nondisclosure**

Maryland is a full-practice state since licensure laws guarantee autonomy to nurse practitioners (NPs) to engage in all elements of nursing practice, including evaluating patients, diagnosis, ordering and interpreting diagnostic tests, and initiating and managing treatment interventions (American Association of Nurse Practitioners, 2022). The state's preparing and dispensing law (Section 10.27.07.07) requires a nurse practitioner to adhere to the labeling requirements of Health Occupations Article, § 12-505, record the prescriptions on the patient's chart and maintain prescription files (Casetext, 2022). Although the state does not have a comprehensive policy for addressing disclosure and non-disclosure, healthcare professionals rely massively upon the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. This policy requires healthcare professionals to obtain prior written authorization before disclosing protected health information (PHI) and notify the patient of information use, track disclosures, and document privacy guidelines and procedures (Edemekong et al., 2022). These strategies are vital in addressing disclosure and nondisclosure.

**Strategies to Guide Decision-making in the Scenario**

Notably, prescribing a new medication is a complex endeavor, considering limited information about it and a lack of approval from the FDA. Therefore, the decision-making process in the case scenario should be consistent with evidence-based practices for identifying ideal drugs for specific patients’ health needs. According to Rosenthal & Burchum (2021), it is essential to establish the drug's cost, guidelines, availability, interactions, side effects, allergies, and the need for monitoring before writing its prescriptions. As a healthcare professional, I would make decisions after consulting the pharmacist and sharing information with the patient and the patient's family regarding the new drug. Secondly, I would evaluate the drug’s benefits against potential risks and communicate findings to all stakeholders. Finally, I would report any near misses or medical errors emanating from the prescription or administration processes to safeguard patient safety.

**The Process of Writing Prescriptions**

The overarching objective of preventing adverse events like medication errors should underpin the process of writing prescriptions. Rosenthal & Burchum (2021) recommend healthcare professionals consider various profound elements when prescribing medications. These elements are the prescriber information (name, license number, and contact), the prescriber's US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) number (if applicable), patient information, allergies, the name of the drug, drug identification, strength, dosage and frequency, the number of tablets or capsules to dispense, and the number of refills. Before writing prescriptions, healthcare professionals should determine the patient's health needs and issues, evaluate the therapeutic objectives, select the correct drug, educate patients and family members, and establish the need for follow-up.

**Conclusion**

JJ's case scenario presents various ethical and legal implications, including the need to safeguard all bioethical principles and the subsequent consequences of failing to comply with the ethical standards of nursing. Healthcare professionals can improve patient safety by practicing appropriate interventions for prescribing medications. Safer medication prescription entails selecting the correct drugs, addressing disclosure and nondisclosure, adhering to state and federal regulations, and educating patients and family members about the benefits, correct dosage and frequency, and potential side effects.

**References**

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