



ETHICAL DIMENSIONS

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Case: Is Mob Money Acceptable?

Long Island Jewish Medical Center, a private hospital, may be forced to wrestle with its acceptance of a donation from sources under investigation for links to organized crime. It is planning to construct a \$2 million bone marrow transplant unit for children with leukemia, other blood disorders and tumors. The four-bed, 4,000 square-foot addition to the hospital is needed in a four-county area where only one other such unit exists to serve a population of more than 6 million. The proposed name for the new entity is: The Gambino Medical and Science Foundation Bone Marrow Transplant Unit. The name honors Thomas and Joseph Gambino, sons of the late mob boss Carlo Gambino. The sons have been cited by Justice Department officials as members of a powerful crime family and indicted on criminal charges including extortion and, in the case of Thomas Gambino, murder. For decades the Gambinos have been major donors and fund-raisers for a foundation that has raised more than \$12 million for the medical center. A spokesperson for the hospital stated: "We are in the business of saving lives not substituting ourselves for appropriate judicial process." As a social work administrator you are being asked to vote on the appropriateness of accepting this gift.

1 strongly agree 2 agree 3 not sure 4 disagree 5 strongly disagree

Individual Issues

1. Taking goods that I suspect have been gotten illegally is ethically wrong.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I should assume the best about another person until this is clearly disproved.

1 2 3 4 5

3. You are concerned about repercussions to the hospital if you outwardly reject the gift.

1 2 3 4 5

4. To accept such money implies that "the end justifies the means". Such a principle is widely rejected on ethical grounds.

1 2 3 4 5

5. All human action is "tainted" and imperfect. Why draw the line here?

1 2 3 4 5

Institutional Issues

1. The hospital spokesperson is right. Hospitals heal, courts make judgments.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Accepting this money sends a very bad message to patients, staff, and community--"it's the money that counts!" The hospital should decline the offer.

1 2 3 4 5

3. The hospital should accept the money but be discrete about the source of the funds.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The hospital should reject the money and let the community know about its decision not to accept the money.

1 2 3 4 5

5. This is no worse than accepting money from the federal government which subsidizes the tobacco industry--a cause of more deaths than the Gambinos.

1 2 3 4 5

Societal Issues

1. Society is challenging the tax-free status of hospitals. Such incidents foster this attitude.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Public trust in health care professionals has eroded dramatically. Aligning with the Gambino family contributes to such public mistrust.

1 2 3 4 5

3. By openly accepting these funds we can champion one of our society's richest heritages: you are innocent until proven guilty.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Politics is the art of compromise in a democracy. In the public arena good deeds are always entangled with evil.

1 2 3 4 5

5. In a society it is essential to divide its vital functions and to respect these divisions. Courts are the societal mechanisms for determining guilt and culpability. Society suffers when hospitals make judgments appropriate for the courts.

1 2 3 4 5



**OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.**