



ETHICAL DIMENSIONS

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Physician Joint Ventures

As a social worker, you are involved in discharge planning in an acute care hospital. A group of investors have recently opened a rehab and long-term care facility nearby. Many members of your medical staff are investors in this joint venture and have begun to refer their patients to this new facility. You and several other members of the discharge planning team are concerned about what you see as emerging patterns of behavior. First, it seems to you that more orders are being written for follow-up care than was the case prior to the joint venture. Second, it is quite clear that patients are being steered to this new facility, even when another facility seems to offer care that is more appropriate for this specific patient. You have read some of the recent studies concerning referral patterns among physicians who are partners in joint ventures and you feel that the bad news of these studies is confirmed by your experience.

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

Individual Issues

1. A physician should not join such a joint venture.

1 2 3 4 5

2. If a physician is open and honest with a patient such referral is OK.

1 2 3 4 5

3. A social worker should confront a physician who behaves in questionable ways.

1 2 3 4 5

4. A social worker should disclose such arrangements to patients.

1 2 3 4 5

5. A physician has a right to invest her/his resources as they see fit.

1 2 3 4 5

Institutional Issues

1. The hospital should have policies prohibiting such joint ventures.

1 2 3 4 5

2. The hospital should have criteria for selecting after-care facilities.

1 2 3 4 5

3. The hospital should lobby for legislation regulating such ventures.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The county medical society should lobby for physician freedom in such issues.

1 2 3 4 5

5. The press should clarify the nature and growth of such ventures for the public.

1 2 3 4 5

Societal Issues

1. State legislation should protect the freedom of physicians in these matters.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Federal legislation should establish national consistency about joint ventures.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Self-referral should be outlawed.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Such matters cannot be regulated by legislation, it's moral character that counts.

1 2 3 4 5

5. If we clarify these issues sufficiently for patients they will take the matter into their own hands.

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.**