

**Book: The Tracks We Leave: Ethics in Healthcare Management**

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This was an excellent book and I recommend it be added to the library at each health care facility. The book is broken into seven chapters, with each chapter beginning with a case study from which the author uses as a point of departure for discussion regarding the specific breach in ethics. Frankie Perry has written a well thought out book on a complex subject that is a part of the every day life of hospital administrators. Every organization is faced with ethical dilemmas such as the delivery of health care, business adventures and expansion, as well as conflicts of interest surrounding the awarding of contracts or the hiring of employees. It is here through these case studies, that the author provides examples of ethical behavior that may or may not be considered acceptable, and then leads the reader through the maze of legal, moral and behavioral requirements for cultivating and selecting the right path. The book further elaborates that strategic skills and knowledge required at the interpersonal, group and organizational levels for healthcare managers to carry out their responsibilities to their employees and the organization. I believe the book could be useful in an undergraduate program in healthcare systems, as it provides the reader a conceptual avenue for developing requisite skill levels needed to become a successful CEO.

Each chapter begins with a case study that may reflect certain realities in health care management, where there are competing values and moral conflicts. Each case is then represented in detailed discussion as to the ethical issue at question and any related issues.

The first chapter opens with a case study on Paradise Hills Medical Center and focuses on medical errors, truth telling and autonomy. As with some of the chapters, but not all, the chapter is followed by an essay "Deciding Values", written by Joan McIver Gibson, Ph.D.

Chapter two opens with the Qual Plus HMO case and explores the issue of conflicting moral demands, where an individual in a leadership position is asked to carry out an action or observes a behavior they believe is unethical. There are two essay's following the chapter.

In chapter three, the case study on the Rolling Meadows Community Hospital explores relationships surrounding mentoring, sexual harassment and gender discrimination. The discussion ends with the ambiguities of "wrong doing."

Chapter four uses a case study from University Hospital that highlights professional impairment, compromising patient safety and the graduate education program. An essay by Clinton H. Dowd, M.D completes the discussion.

The Hillside County Medical Center case study in chapter five focuses on "right sizing" the workforce through use of employee reductions. Discussion further ensues with ethically sound decision making when a facility is in a financial crisis.

Chapter six details the legal perspectives on each of the preceding cases, while chapter seven discusses the ethics of managing employees, interpersonal conflicts that exist and the dilemmas that can occur within the health care system.

The epilogue provides a follow-up for each case for those who are interested to know how the various cases were resolved, and I may add an important conclusion when determining the usefulness of the book.

The book was an easy read, permitting me to complete it in just short of two weeks. I found the book to be interesting, and it provided a nice review of my own personal and professional ethics, as I pondered my response if I found myself in a similar situation. Senior healthcare executives may find the book useful as a personal "working" reference, and may find it beneficial when mentoring young and prospective leaders.

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