



Sleepy Classes
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MAD- 2020
ETHICS
Day - 48

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Question:

Recently, because of the COVID-19 scare, a patient has been turned away from a major government hospital. The patient's family is claiming that the patient was suffering from cancer and the patient was getting chemotherapy. On the scheduled chemotherapy appointment, the patient was turned away. The patient's health deteriorated, which ultimately caused his death.

The family claims that neither the patient nor any of the family members have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have any history of contact with a COVID-19 positive patient and they deem the denial of admission unjust.

This story is increasingly getting coverage on Social Media platforms as well as on various national news channels.

Doctors and the staff of the said hospital claim that they lack PPE kits and other protective gears to adequately attend the patients and that's why they are turning away patients.

You are the Chief Medical Officer Incharge of the hospitals in the state.

1. What will be your course of action against the administration of the said hospital?
2. What are the steps that you will take so that such incidents are not repeated?
3. What measures will you take so that COVID-19 situation does not spiral out of control in your jurisdiction?

Answer:

Covid 19 situation has evolved rapidly in India and has led to many unprecedented and unimagined challenges for the common man, central and state governments, health facilities, etc.

Many people are dead and many continue to die. Having said that the lives which can be saved should be saved and any negligence should be appropriately penalised.

1. As chief Medical officer, it becomes important that this is not repeated. Every life matters whether of a patient or of a doctor. I will enquire into the claim of the hospital of PPE kits being adequately available or not.
 - If found true, I will make suitable arrangements to ensure safety of doctors and patients. All the safety equipments in adequate numbers to be made available for all the medical staff not only in the said hospital but in other hospitals under my jurisdiction as well.
 - If found false, then strict action should be taken against the hospital administration.
 - The action should be such that medical services won't suffer.
 - The family should be duly compensated for their loss due to medical negligence.
2. To ensure that such incidents are not repeated:
 - Sensitise all the doctors and the paramedical staff to the situation to ensure their participation.
 - Reserving some beds for Covid 19 patients (like Delhi govt. has reserved 20% of beds for Covid patients)

- Make sure black marketing of beds is prevented and all the facilities are available to everyone irrespective of class of patients.
 - If it is not an emergency, advice patients to use tele consultation and avoid hospitals as much as possible.
 - If hospitals refuse admission or over charge, patients can contact helpline so that speedy resolution can occur.
 - Make sure doctors and paramedical staff have adequate availability of PPE and testing kits at all time, (Even at non Covid hospitals).
3. Not for letting it spiral out of control:
- Increase testing (Test and Trace).
 - Adequate Quarantine facilities.
 - Adequate coordination between various departments of government.
 - Adequate awareness (IEC).
 - Adequate use of technology like various apps (Aarogya Setu).