

INTRODUCTION or BACKGROUND

"Hard choice" decisions in radiology refer to complex and ethically challenging situations that require radiologists to make difficult choices, often involving trade-offs between competing values or principles. Such decisions include changes to protocol, informing patients of changes, choosing between treatment options, patient requests for operations, managing conflicts of interest, and changing queue order based on opinion of urgency¹⁻³. Also, many times these larger decisions are made amongst multiple medical professions that involve many smaller decisions⁴. These decisions can have significant implications for patient care, diagnosis, and treatment. Understanding the role of "hard choice" decisions is crucial for radiologists to navigate ethically complex scenarios effectively and provide optimal care to patients.

OBJECTIVES

- To comprehend the concept of "hard choice" decisions and their relevance within the radiology workplace.
- To analyze clinical findings and procedural details related to the use of "hard choice" decisions in radiology.
- To discuss the implications and benefits of incorporating "hard choice" decision-making in radiology work environments.

METHODS

A literature review was conducted to investigate the occurrence of ethical dilemmas in radiology, as well as how physicians identify and solve these ethical problems when they arise in the work environment.

RESULTS

Clinical findings and procedural details reveal that "hard choice" decisions in radiology are encountered in various scenarios, such as balancing patient autonomy with clinical recommendations, managing limited resources, and addressing conflicts between medical professionals.

RESULTS cont.

PROCESS

- Distinguish between complications and errors
- Categorize the type of error/complication
- Consider the responsibilities of a medical professional to the patient
- Use ethical standards to make a plan⁵

COMMUNICATION

- Maintain "common language"
- Discuss ethics cases/questions in research journals and academic spaces⁵

ETHICS

- 56% of radiologists, when asked if they have experienced an ethics dilemma, responded that they had⁶
- There is still less than ideal adherence to ethical standards⁶
- Residents were more likely than attendings to report errors back to patients⁶
- Trainees were less likely to report errors back to group directors⁶

ACCOUNTABILITY

- From colleagues/coworkers
- Without fear of retaliation to better "hard choice" decision-making

INNOVATION

- Radiology is a rapidly innovating field of medicine that will encounter an increasing number of "hard choice" decisions that will require structured ways of dealing with these dilemmas⁷

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION cont.

The utilization of "hard choice" decisions in the radiology workplace is a critical aspect of ethical and patient-focused care. Radiologists must be equipped with the skills and frameworks to navigate complex situations effectively. The incorporation of medically informed medical professionals, with differing experiences and perspectives, also leads to consideration of a larger number of possible outcomes and determination of ethics adherence⁸. Making decisions, knowing there may not be a singular right decision, but multiple good decisions that take the well-being of the patient into consideration⁹. Embracing structured approaches to "hard choice" decision-making can enhance the quality of radiology practice and contribute to improved patient outcomes.

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