**Chapter Exercises**

**PART I. INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN HEALTHCARE**

**CHAPTER 5: Values and Ethics of Healthcare Social Work**

1. You are the social worker on a pulmonary care unit. The patient is a 75 years old, has lung cancer, and is on a ventilator in a comatose state. The patient’s family, medical team, and ethics committee have determined that keeping the patient on a ventilator is futile care, and they order the patient to be slowly withdrawn from the ventilator. Furthermore, the cost of caring for this patient in now in excess of $300,000 and a shortage of available beds in the hospital has meant that some patients have had to be referred to other hospitals.

* How would you feel about being involved in this process?
* Apply a decision making-model to determine if this is an ethical course of action or not. What values are involved?
* What other information would you want to know?
* How do justice and the distribution of resources figure into this case?

2. Your hospital has decided to close its outpatient dialysis center to deal with a largely undocumented alien population. The hospital has agreed to cover the costs of six months of services in a private community-based outpatient clinic with which you have formed a close relationship as you often refer patients with full insurance coverage. The dialysis center has asked you to identify the clinic patients who are undocumented. You want to maintain your good working relationship with this service as they often make special arrangements for some of your insured patients but are concerned that the undocumented patients will face discrimination. How do you balance the interests of all parties?

**OR**

The situation is the same as the one described above, but the hospital has asked to identify where the undocumented patients are originally from and to work with a contractor who will fly the patients back home and arrange for dialysis services in their homeland. You have read that these companies fail to follow through with their patients and in fact that many patients have died because of access to services. How would you work with administration to ensure that the patients actually receive the services promised?

3. You are working in an outpatient women and children’s clinic that has a large immigrant population. You learn from one of your young African patients that her family has arranged for her marriage and that, in preparation, they have scheduled a clitorectomy, which is a custom in their country and family. A local practitioner will perform the procedure in her home. Your patient believes she should have the procedure but is frightened. She has asked that you maintain her confidentiality and not disclose her concerns to her family or other professionals in the clinic. Would you maintain her confidentiality? If yes, what ethical principles and sections of the Code of Ethics would justify your choice? If no, what ethical principles and sections of the Code of Ethics would justify your choice, and how would you intervene?