

CS #4: Healthcare Data (Discussion Reflection)

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Question 1 Answer:

I think the intersection of an individual's duties and to whom they owe these duties is intuitive and versatile. Take the Infinity executive as an example, he has a responsibility to Infinity, which is to achieve the partnership with Providence so that Infinity can make more profits. For this duty, I think it is very natural or intuitive for the Infinity executive because he is the company leader, whose job is to help company earn more money. On the other hand, I think the intersection can also be versatile, such as taking both legal and ethical concerns into consideration. For example, we can see from the case study that, both the Infinity executive and the Providence executive shall have a responsibility to the patients. However, the Infinity executive only cares about whether accessing patients' data is legal or not, while the Providence executive shares more about ethical concerns.

Question 2 Answer:

I think there are two explicit advantages of a deontological framework for ethical reasoning. Firstly, people with a deontological framework can be more self-motivated in terms of sharing more ethical concerns when making a complicated decision, because they regard ethical concerns as their responsibility. Secondly, people with a deontological framework can also influence other people around when discussion is required before making a decision. If more people involved would share more ethical concerns, then the ethical reasoning for making a final decision will be more important.

Question 3 Answer:

I think there are also two explicit disadvantages of a deontological framework for ethical reasoning. Firstly, if we care too much about ethical responsibility bearing with a deontological framework, we may encounter some conflicts with other important factors for making a decision, such as the financial benefits as discussed in the case study. These conflicts can induce potentially negative impacts on individuals or companies. Secondly, apart from economical factors, I am also concerned that a deontological framework may distort the balance between legal reasoning and ethical reasoning. Can we also regard legal concerns as equivalently important responsibilities compared with ethical reasoning? I think this question should be answered before applying a deontological framework for ethical reasoning to decision making, because we have to make sure all legal concerns can be addressed for the final decision.

Question 4 Answer:

To resolve the ambiguity, I would take three factors into consideration: legal reasoning, ethical reasoning, and financial reasoning. Firstly, and most importantly, when I make a decision, I have to make sure all actions are legal, so I would start with a deontological framework for legal reasoning. After addressing all legal concerns, I will utilize a deontological framework for ethical reasoning to balance the trade-off between ethical and financial concerns. I think this is reasonable because if we take more ethical concerns into consideration, we tend to lose some financial benefits. To resolve the ambiguity, I could claim approximately 30% to 50% profits reduction to address as many ethical concerns as possible, when I am involved with decision making to take actions.