

Initial Post

The ACM's case study on *Medical Implant Risk Analysis* presents a scenario where a software engineer discovers that a medical implant device has a potential failure risk that could endanger patients. What struck me in this case is how clearly it demonstrates the tension between organisational pressure, professional responsibility, and user safety. The ACM Code of Ethics makes this responsibility explicit. Section 1.2 requires computing professionals to "avoid harm," and Section 1.4 calls for fairness and respect for stakeholders. In this scenario, the engineer's duty is not just technical but moral, since the consequences of failure involve patient health and, potentially, loss of life. The code positions the well-being of the public as a priority that overrides organisational loyalty.

The British Computer Society (BCS) Code of Conduct echoes this stance. Its first directive emphasises the "public interest," requiring professionals to ensure that their actions do not risk public safety. Unlike the ACM Code, which provides more detailed ethical guidance, the BCS Code frames responsibilities in broader principles. Nevertheless, both codes align on the idea that transparency, reporting risks, and resisting pressure to conceal defects are essential professional behaviours.

From a legal standpoint, medical device industries operate under strict regulations such as FDA approval in the US or MHRA standards in the UK. Failing to disclose safety issues could lead to litigation, regulatory sanctions, and even criminal liability. Socially, trust in medical technology depends on honesty from professionals. As academic literature on safety-critical systems (e.g., Leveson, 2011) repeatedly stresses, ethical lapses in healthcare technologies can have far-reaching consequences. This case study reinforces the idea that professionalism in computing extends far beyond coding ability; it requires ethical courage, accountability, and a commitment to user safety.

Summary Post: Reflection on Peer Feedback

Reflecting on the peer feedback I received, I found that much of it focused on surface-level elements such as clarity, structure, and tone rather than deep engagement with the ethical issues. While this kind of feedback can be helpful, it made me think about how peer review often misses opportunities for deeper critical discussion. Very few comments addressed my interpretation of the ACM or BCS Codes, or the broader implications of risk, responsibility, and accountability in safety-critical systems. This made me realise that ethical analysis can sometimes be overshadowed by writing-style commentary, which is easier to identify but less valuable in developing professional judgement.

Even so, the feedback served as a reminder of how important communication is when discussing ethical dilemmas. If writing lacks clarity, even strong arguments can become difficult for readers to follow. I also recognised that in professional environments, especially in computing or healthcare contexts, people may prioritise clear documentation over philosophical depth simply because clarity affects decision-making and safety. Overall, engaging with peer responses helped me see the balance between expressing ethical reasoning and presenting it in a way that is accessible to others, and it highlighted areas where I can refine both my writing and my analytical approach.