



A Pro-Bono Therapy Clinic: Valuable and Viable?

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Abstract

John fell while trimming trees, requiring shoulder surgery. The physician ordered physical therapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) as John could not work. He did not have insurance nor finances for therapy services. A friend suggested RockU CARES pro-bono PT and OT clinic, where John met Sunni, an experienced OT and Rockhurst University faculty mentor. After John's evaluation, Sunni recommended a return visit. However, John did not return causing Sunni to feel beyond frustrated as she reflected on John and countless others who became injured and lost the ability to work or care for themselves but did not follow-up with rehabilitative services. John was the tipping point for Sunni to question the value of the pro-bono clinic. RockU CARES clinic attempted to provide social justice by serving patients from vulnerable situations. However, given the high no-show rate, what should Sunni and her team do to serve these patients' needs?

Learning Outcomes

In completing this assignment, students should be able to:

1. Discern the social responsibility of health professions to serve the community's vulnerable populations.
2. Analyze a pro bono clinic's effectiveness in addressing the unique healthcare needs of vulnerable populations.
3. Evaluate the barriers to serving the rehabilitation needs of vulnerable populations within the pro-bono model and create strategies the pro-bono clinic could implement.
4. Propose solutions leveraging technology and community resources to improve the pro-bono model described.

Application

This descriptive case is most appropriate for all levels of courses in ethics, social responsibility, not-for-profit business, healthcare management and public policy.

Key Words

Not-for-profit, pro-bono care, social justice

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