**Ethical Dilemma as a Correctional Counsellor**

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**Ethical Dilemma as a Correctional Counsellor**

**Introduction**

Correctional counselors usually face complex dilemmas within their field of practice and these finds them at crossroads during the decision-making processes at the correctional facilities or systems. They are mandated to operate in challenging and unique environments as they continue to serve inmates within the correctional facilities without bias. An example of a dilemma that befits such a profession is when the need arises to strike a delicate balance between preservation of information confidentiality arising from therapeutic sessions and taking up the obligation to report a security threat or potential harm towards other inmates (Snelling & Quick, 2022). Notably, correctional counselors continue to play a pivotal role when it comes to addressing the needs of incarcerated inmates in conjunction with their mental wellbeing. In the wake of an ethical dilemma as a correctional counselor, I would still manage to foster a better environment that necessitates the general rehabilitation of inmates within a correctional system.

**Thesis statement:** This essay delves into describing one ethical dilemma that I might face as a correctional counselor in connection to reporting an inmate that has planned to cause potential harm to another inmate while exploring some of the challenges being faced such as the implications towards the safety of a correctional system and individual therapy.

**The Ethical Dilemma**

As a correctional counselor, I might face an ethical dilemma in my line of work with regards to reporting an inmate that has planned to cause potential harm to another inmate as I strive to uphold the patient-doctor confidentiality obligation. The dilemma stems from tension that is linked to the inmate posing a security threat to the correctional facility since they have planned to cause harm to another inmate. However, respecting confidentiality of information from their therapeutic sessions should also be taken as paramount. According to Hartley and Tarvydas (2022), effective counseling can only be achieved when trust is paramount. Trust is therefore deemed to be very essential within the counseling sessions in a correctional facility so that the inmates can be confident in divulging information with regards to security concerns, planned harm, and any other illicit activities (Elger & Shaw, 2017). In the wake of such an ethical dilemma as a correctional counselor, I would strive to strike a balance between my commitment to sessional information confidentiality and safeguarding the security of the facility.

**Reasons behind the Dilemma**

**Security Threat vs. Confidentiality**

Inmates can only open up to a correctional counselor during a therapeutic session if they believe that the information divulged will be treated with confidentiality. Trust helps in encouraging an individual during a therapeutic session not only to share their aspirations, fears, or even challenges, but also security threats that are imminent in their midst (Darby & Weinstock, 2018). However, ethical tension builds up when sensitive information with regards to security or safety of others is disclosed leaving the counsellor with no choice but to implicate such an inmate to the relevant investigative authorities.

**Report Duty vs. Greater Good**

As a correctional counselor, bearing the burden of reporting planned potential harm from one inmate to another would pose an ethical challenge towards my career in a significant manner. The duty of correctional counselors mainly lies in upholding information confidentiality from therapeutic sessions and that is what necessitates the wellbeing of the correctional community (Isailă & Hostiuc, 2022). However, the greater good would stem from upholding the facility’s security by disclosing such information in a bid to safeguard other inmates. Such a step would require negation of a counselor's role in tandem of advocating for rehabilitation of inmates for the greater good of the entire correctional system or facility.

**Affecting the Rehabilitation of an Inmate**

As a correction counselor, I would also be faced with an ethical dilemma because reporting information that comes from a therapeutic session to the authorities would negatively impact an inmate’s rehabilitation (Novalis et al., 2018). Conversely, neglecting the broader concerns that have been raised with regards to the security within the facility while prioritizing a relationship established in a therapeutic session would turn out to be wrong.

**Overcoming the Ethical Dilemma**

Careful consideration has to be made while approaching such a sensitive matter within the correctional counselor’s profession in the sense that clear communication has to be established from the onset of such therapeutic sessions. I would set out a clear definition of my dual nature role within the facility while using a principled approach to the inmate so that it is understood. In the end, I would consider a security threat to be more grievous than breaching information confidentiality from a therapeutic session and for that matter, I will have to disclose such information while ensuring that the other inmates’ safety is assured within the facility.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, correctional counselors are often mandated to operate within environments that prove to be challenging and very unique despite being faced with various dilemmas. The main dilemma described within this essay revolves around their mandate to strike a delicate balance between preservation of information confidentiality arising from therapeutic sessions and taking up the obligation to report a security threat or potential harm towards other inmates. Additionally, correctional counselors come in handy when handling the mental healthcare needs of incarcerated inmates so as to ensure their mental wellbeing. They have to carry out their obligation despite being faced with such an ethical dilemma as they have to foster a better environment that necessitates the inmates’ general rehabilitation within the correctional system. In that regard, this essay has managed to describe an ethical dilemma that I might face as a correctional counselor in connection to reporting an inmate that has planned to cause potential harm to another inmate while exploring some of the challenges being faced such as the implications towards the safety of a correctional system and individual therapy.

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