

Professional Decision Making

Glasgow and West of Scotland
Branch

Workshops 14th November 2002 Prof Jay Wingfield

1

Learning outcomes

- Use a systematic, reasoned, defensible approach to decisions
- Consider legal, ethical and contractual consequences
- Choose options
- Share views and solutions

2

Professional Judgement

- Knows the rules
- Analyses the problem
- Applies principles
- Adds in experience
- Exercises pragmatism
- Synthesises a "good" solution

3

A systematic process

1. Gather relevant facts
2. Prioritise and ascribe values
3. Generate options
4. Choose an option – and justify it

4

Explanation of terms

- Criminal Law
- Administrative Law (NHS)
- Civil Law and common law
- Vicarious liability
- "All reasonable steps"

5

Stage 1 Gather Relevant Facts

- What criminal law applies here?
- What NHS law/quasi-law applies here?
- What civil law applies here?
- What guidance does the Code of Ethics give here?
- What professional knowledge is relevant here?
- Where can I get more help?

6

Stage 2 Prioritise and Ascribe Values

- Patient, client, customer
- Patient's carer, parent, children, contacts
- The wider public
- Pharmacists and the profession
- Healthcare professionals
- Employer
- Yourself

Stage 3 Generate Options

- "What **could** I do in this situation?"
- From the sublime to the ridiculous!
- Consequences – "What might happen if I select this option?"
- Probability – "How likely are these consequences?"

Stage 4 Choose an Option

- "What **would** I do in this situation?"
- Justification
- Record keeping
- Significant event audit
- Defensive Practice

A Scenario

You are the superintendent pharmacist for a small company owning three pharmacies. One of these is near to an edge of town shopping complex. To match the competition, you have been going in yourself on Sundays to open between 11.00 and 3.00.

This Sunday morning you decide to repair a broken security light at home before going to the pharmacy. Alas, you slip off the ladder and break your ankle. As your wife drives you to casualty, your trusty assistant, Jean, phones you on the mobile and says she's at your pharmacy, she's unlocked it – should she stay, go or carry on without you?

Dilemma

- What are your options?
- What might be the consequences?
- Which option would you choose?
- And why?