Abstract

In this paper I will provide an analysis of the ethical, legal and multicultural challenges that are relevant in crisis management and response. I will also explain methods in which counselors can overcome these ethical, legal, and multicultural challenges when managing and responding to a crisis.

In the case, *Bruff v. North Mississippi Health Services, Incorporation, 2001*, a counselor was terminated from her duties after requesting to be excused from rendering services to a lesbian client because it conflicted with her religious beliefs. This particular case is imperative because it pinpoints some relevant ethical and legal issues relating to counseling.

Ethics involves doing what is right. According to Hermann and Herlihy, an area in which counselors often struggle deals with this issue of when it is appropriate and inappropriate to refer a client to someone else. According to the ACA Code of Ethics, which is the standards that counselors use as a guide, in section (C.2.a.) counselors should only practice within their boundaries of their competence. However, within those same lines, counselors should gain the knowledge, understanding, personal awareness and sensitivity skills needed to work with a diverse multicultural population. According to the ACA Code of Ethics, counselors have an ethical obligation to seek knowledge that will enhance their understanding of clients who are culturally different.

The legal barriers related to this case involve discrimination. Counselors cannot refuse to work with because of issues related to the client’s sexual orientation. This form of discrimination is not legal.
According to Hermann and Herlihy, counselors who refuse to counsel a homosexual client on relationship issues can cause emotional harm to the client. Furthermore, this constitutes illegal discrimination.

The ACA Code of Ethics would probably serve counselors well in helping them to overcome these legal, ethical, and multicultural barriers. Working towards being knowledgeable and also being aware of what the state and local laws are in the area in which you practice because state laws do vary from region to region. The goal of counselors is to respect and promote the welfare of our clients, and refusing to counsel a client on certain issues could have a negative impact on the client. Accepting clients despite of their beliefs, values, and culture is a vital component of being an effective counselor. In conclusion, as counselors we must be very careful not to impose our beliefs and our values on those that we service. If the counselor finds it difficult to withstand from this, seek out help, and assistance from professional colleagues.
Reference:


ACA Code of Ethics:
www.ncyu.edu.tw/files/list/family/CodeEthics05enhancedprint%5B5B1%5D.pdf