

Case Study – Immigrant Caregiver Mother Fears Visit to Hospital



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Bioethics case study on caregiver dilemma.

Ms. Eve Rodriguez is a 24-year-old female diagnosed with stage two breast carcinoma. She recently underwent surgery, and her oncologist has recommended chemotherapy, explaining that without it, her tumor is likely to return and pose a more significant threat to her life. Eve strongly desires to undergo chemotherapy, viewing it as the best chance to save her life. However, she is currently in a very weak state and requires constant care and support.

Eve's mother, Gloria, is her primary caregiver and sole means of transportation to medical appointments. An immigrant from a foreign country, Gloria has been hesitant to accompany her daughter to the hospital. She is deeply concerned due to recent experiences of friends and acquaintances who have encountered difficulties with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Fearing potential issues with the federal government, Gloria is afraid to visit the hospital, which in turn prevents her from driving Eve to her chemotherapy appointments.

Eve, who has a strong emotional bond with her mother and trusts her implicitly, has made the decision to forego chemotherapy because she does not want to be cared for by anyone other than Gloria. As a result, she is unwilling to pursue the life-saving treatment that her medical team recommends.

The medical team is extremely concerned about Eve's decision and has reached out to the ethics committee for guidance on how to navigate this situation.