

Case Study IV. Work Environment

The new quality management (QM) director is a dually-credentialed HIM professional and Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality. As one of the conditions of her acceptance of employment, she indicated that she would need latitude to attend educational offerings to ensure her continuing education unit (CEU) obligations were met. She frequently attends meetings, both locally and nationally; however, she does not extend the same opportunities to her credentialed staff, citing the workload as the obstacle. Despite several creative plans that were presented by the staff, which include hosting a meeting at their facility, the QM director will not approve these activities. The staff cannot secure the meeting space without her approval. Is there an ethical violation, dilemma, or concern?

In this scenario, there is an ethical concern. The new QM director is not respecting the educational and professional needs of her staff. She is placing her self-interest above theirs by frequently attending professional meetings, while not honoring their requests to develop creative ways to meet their continuing educational needs. This may indirectly reflect that she does not value the credentials of her staff.

1. *What was the intent of the AHIMA member's actions that resulted in an ethics violation being brought forward?*

The QM director is placing her self-interest above her staff's by frequently attending professional meetings and not honoring their requests to develop creative ways to meet their continuing educational needs.

2. *What is the potential harm to the AHIMA organization or AHIMA as a result of the act?*

The QM director is not supporting her staff or allowing them opportunities to maintain their credentials. Without the opportunity to obtain the CEUs, staff will possibly be in jeopardy of losing their credentials. Also, the staff may not see that these credentials are valued.

3. *What is the status of the AHIMA member's training, education, and awareness of the AHIMA Code of Ethics?*

The HIM director is credentialed and assumed to be a member. She should be aware of the Code of Ethics. Each year, members and credentialed nonmembers must agree to abide by the Code of Ethics when joining AHIMA or renewing AHIMA Membership.

4. *What AHIMA Ethical Code has been violated?*

The principles and guidelines that this member possibly violated include:

Principle II. Put service and the health and welfare of persons before self-interest and conduct themselves in the practice of the profession so as to bring honor to themselves, their peers, and to the health information management profession.

Principle V. Advance health information management knowledge and practice through continuing educations, research, publications, and presentations.

Principle XI. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of every person.