

Ethics Questions

Question 1

A 42-year-old woman is referred by her company's HR department for health coaching around smoking cessation. During the first meeting with Coach Susan she shares that she had been smoke-free for five years but recently started again and is finding it very difficult to stop. Upon further exploration she reveals that she started smoking right after the unexpected death of her husband from a heart attack two months ago. Coach Susan was recently divorced and is grieving the loss of her marriage. As the client describes how lost, alone and anxious she feels, Susan realizes that her own feelings are getting triggered. She is concerned that it may impact her ability to effectively coach the client.

What's the most appropriate course for the coach to take regarding self-management?

1. Seek out support to explore if the situation is too challenging and decide on the best course of action for the client.
2. Disclose to the client that because she is also experiencing a deep personal loss it would be inappropriate to coach her and refers her to another coach.
3. Give herself an opportunity to see whether this is a momentary trigger or one that is continuously present.
4. Share with the client that she is also experiencing a personal loss and understands the depth of her pain.

Question 2

Coach Susan, RN is a Health Coach for a small manufacturing company. She coaches employees who are identified through their HRA as prediabetic, diabetic or with metabolic syndrome and who have agreed to participate in the company's four-week educational *healthy eating program*. Coach Susan is not a nutritionist or RD, however as a nurse Coach working in collaboration with the healthy eating program, she has been doing significant nutrition study and research on her own. Several clients have indicated that they don't really understand some of the dietary literature provided in the healthy eating program. Susan asks her clients if it would be helpful to spend a little time switching hats during the coaching session to provide additional nutritional education.

It is ethically appropriate for Susan to:

1. Offer to switch hats and provide additional nutritional education with her clients is appropriate because she is an RN.
2. Review the *healthy eating program* literature with her clients and put it into simpler language for them.
3. Meet with the *healthy eating program* RD to get clarification on the information her clients don't understand before reviewing it with her client.
4. Refrain from providing nutritional information or guidance because it is out of scope of her professional credentials.

Question 3

Coach Cindy is employed by a medical rehab practice primarily serving patients who have had serious injuries and suffer from chronic pain. Cindy co-leads a pain management group with a pain management specialist and provides one-on-one coaching to patients. One of her clients reveals that he has been buying OxyContin 'on the street' to manage his pain and has begun selling it in order to afford his habit. Cindy has a coaching agreement with the client that ensures confidentiality unless the client stipulates otherwise in writing, except as required by law. Cindy is very concerned about her client's addiction and use of street drugs. The sale of drugs outside of prescribed medical channels is illegal.

Ethically Cindy has a responsibility to:

1. Inform the client's attending physician.
2. Request the client to inform his physician.
3. Advise the client that she cannot coach him as long as he is engaged in this behavior.
4. Refer the client to drug rehab.

Questions 4

Health and wellness Coach Susan works for an outpatient medical organization that also offers coaching and counseling services. Clients are referred to her internally from the counseling and medical providers. Anyone who is referred to her has also completed a basic organizational intake form that includes contact information along with a signed HIPAA privacy disclosure and becomes part of the client's medical file. When Susan meets with anyone who has been referred to her, she shares her Coach qualifications, explains what coaching is and is not, the roles and responsibilities of the coach and the client, and discusses what the client expects to get from coaching and what reasonable outcomes could be expected.

Before Susan begins the coaching engagement, what is she ethically required to obtain from the client?

1. A completed coaching welcome packet.
2. A completed form regarding all health and wellness concerns.
3. A new signed HIPAA privacy disclosure specific to coaching.
4. A written and signed coaching agreement.

Questions 5

John is an independent certified public accountant (CPA) who is contracted by Coach Sam to prepare and process Sam's invoices to individual clients as well as to corporate clients. John is bonded (bonds protect consumers from harmful and unethical business practices) and as a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, is also required to uphold the AICPA Code of Professional Conduct.

What is coach Sam's ethical responsibility regarding John and the client information to which he has access?

1. John's CPA Code of Professional Conduct and the fact that he is bonded are sufficient to cover him regarding confidentiality of Sam's client information.
2. Because John cannot see any medical and/or coaching information, it is not necessary to request that John adhere to strict levels of confidentiality identified in the NBHWC Code of Ethics.
3. Request that John commits to adherence to maintain the strictest levels of confidentiality with all of Sam's client and sponsor information unless release is required by law.