

Ethical Considerations

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Core Ethical Principles

Autonomy

Beneficence

Non-maleficence

Justice

Autonomy

- ▶ An individual has the right to make informed decisions about their own care
 - ▶ Informed consent
 - ▶ Challenge may arise with children or those with cognitive impairments

Beneficence & Non-maleficence

Beneficence

- ▶ Performing actions that are for the benefit of another person
 - ▶ Procedures and treatments done with goal of benefitting the patient
 - ▶ Need to be continually reevaluated

Non-maleficence

- ▶ “Do no harm” - avoid causing harm
 - ▶ Decisions on surgery risk, end of life care



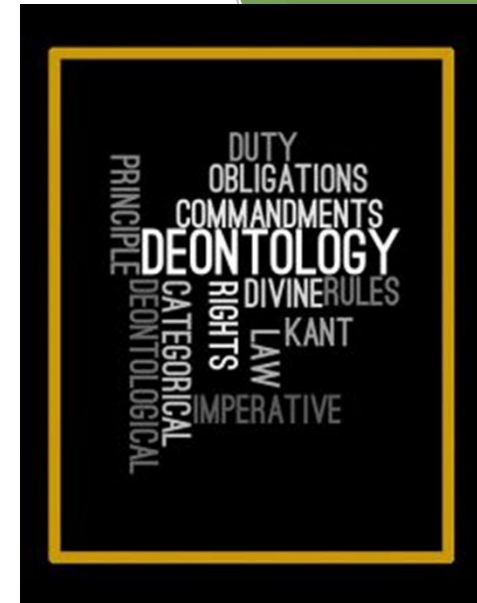
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Justice

- ▶ Fair distribution of healthcare resources
 - ▶ Fair and equitable treatment of all patients
 - ▶ Challenges arise with scarcity of resources

Ethical Theories

- ▶ Ethics of divine commands
 - ▶ Based on religious or moral beliefs of right and wrong
- ▶ Ethics of selfishness
 - ▶ What is right for an individual but does not infringe on the rights of others
- ▶ Ethics of duty and respect (deontology)
 - ▶ Focus is on what is defined as right and less on the consequences
- ▶ Ethics of Consequences (consequentialism)
 - ▶ Practical approach concentrating on outcome perceived to be good for the most people



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Deontology

- ▶ A theory of ethics that judges actions based on whether they follow a set of rules, duty, focus, and intrinsic morality of actions rather than the consequences of those actions.
 - ▶ Duty and Obligation
 - ▶ Moral Rules
 - ▶ Respect for Persons



Ombudsperson



Person that advocates for the rights of the patient and for adequate patient care, and assists in resolving conflicts



Investigate complaints and try to resolve the issue

Ethics Committee

Work with patients, families
and healthcare providers Assist
with resolving ethical problems



Often provide education



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Code of Ethics for Nurses

<https://codeofethics.ana.org/provisions>



Standard for ethical nursing practice



Supports nurses in maintaining professional integrity



Guides nurses in making decisions in complex healthcare environment

What is the PRIMARY function of the hospital ethics committee?

- ▶ A. Provide structure and guidelines for potential problems
- ▶ B. Serve as an open forum for discussions
- ▶ C. Speak for patients to doctors about care issues
- ▶ D. Provide clinical case consultation

What is the PRIMARY function of the hospital ethics committee?

- ▶ **D. Provide clinical case consultation**

References

- ▶ <https://codeofethics.ana.org/provisions>
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