ON TEACHING AND EVALUATING ETHICS COMPETENCIES IN CLINICAL EDUCATION

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Clinical Ethics

• Clarifies issues, values, duties, etc. in clinical encounters.
• Assists in the recognition and naming of clinical ethical issues.
• Utilizes a variety of ethical problem-solving methods.
• Assists in facilitating discussion and compromise, as appropriate.
• Addresses larger societal questions as well as bedside encounters.

Goals for today’s talk

- Review the expectations of health professionals to become “competent” in the human arts beyond science and technology.
- Explore ways to improve judgment in Health professionals.
- Describe some approaches in the classroom that might contribute to this.
- Emphasize that effective role modelling within optimized clinical cultures is the key to both teaching and assessing such skills - the “ethics competencies.”
Clinical Judgment

- Does this patient need an independent translator, or will their child/sister suffice?
- Conflict of Interest?
- Truth and Reconciliation?
- Is this elder abuse?
- Does this patient really want this treatment?
- Lying for the sake of patient privacy?
- Is my great joke appropriate here?
- Should I share my opinion that staffing levels are too low?
- Etc.

Using the Code in Nursing Practice

Ethical Types of Experiences and Situations

Part I. Nursing Values and Ethical Responsibilities
- Providing Safe, Compassionate, Competent and Ethical Care
- Promoting Health and Well-Being
- Promoting and Respecting Informed Decision-Making
- Honoring Dignity
- Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality
- Promoting Justice
- Being Accountable

Part II. Ethical Endeavours Related to Broad Societal Issues

Code of ethics for Canadian Nurses

Examples

- ...sensitive to power differentials
- ...advocate for the use of least-restrictive measures
- ...promote the incapable patient’s participation in decisions, according to patient’s abilities.
- ...listen to a person’s stories to gain greater clarity about goals and wishes
- ...foster a moral community in which ethical issues can be openly discussed.
Canmeds competencies for Physicians.

Examples

• develop rapport and trust with patients and families
• convey health information effectively
• enter into interdependent relationships with other health professions.
• Allocate resources appropriately
• critically evaluate medical information
• manage conflicts of interest

“Core competencies” for ethics consultation

Skills
- assessment
- process
- interpersonal

Knowledge

Attitudes
Examples

• …..understand the nature of value uncertainty.
• ….Listen well and communicate respect and empathy
• …..understand and represent the views of various parties
• ….skilled in a range of methods of moral reasoning

Classroom options

• Reading, writing, and discussion.
• Topics that are realistic, and promote introspection.
• Small groups when possible.
• Emphasis on lifelong learning for health professionals.
Cultural Competence

- An appreciation of the various elements that affect the world views of physicians, patients, and others.
- A nuanced ability to determine which cultures are relevant in patient encounters.
- Universal politeness?
Some things about culture:

• Everyone is embedded in cultures.
• Our cultures affect our sensibilities.
• There are grand, societal cultures, and tiny localized cultures.
  • ("the culture of our unit")
• The cultures that influence us may not always be recognized.

Authenticity and Trust

• Authentic encounters = honest and open communication between people, perceived as mutually respectful.
• Trust = the state of having earned the respect and compassion of the other.
• These greatly enhance therapeutic relationships, and are fundamental to effective learning.

Shared Decision Making

• Sharing starts with patient, extending to primary clinicians, and then to patient’s loved ones, and other clinicians (including trainees).
• Requires interpersonal communications between the people involved.
• Sharing decisions well is the core to teaching students in the clinic. Enhances learning and enables assessment.
Assessing Learning

- Real-time feedback from supervisors and colleagues, in the clinical setting.
- Reasonably in-depth discussions in classrooms, about literature, cases, codes, history, psychology, etc.
- Close reading of written work that reveals something about the assessment skills and attitudes of learners.
- Requires at least someone who “knows” the learner well enough - and who might coordinate formal feedback.

Learning Modules aimed at these competencies…

- Principles of health communication.
- Collaboration and Shared Decision-Making
- Equipoise and clinical practice variations
- Clinical Practice in Multicultural Societies
- Humour in the workplace.
- A Professional’s response to Adversity
- Etc. - these topics are available through JDHEC.

Questions to consider:

- What might be the hazards of trying to put all of these skills onto a list?
- To what degree can these skills be taught? Might they already exist, or not, in young adults?
- Is it reasonable to rely on “self-evaluation” by individuals with respect to moral growth during training?
- Your questions and comments?
Thanks. Discussion?

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