

Nursing ethics essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nursing_ethicsThe nature of nursing means that nursing ethics tends to examine the ethics of caring rather than ‘curing’ by exploring the relationship between the nurse and the person in care.[1]Early work to define ethics in nursing focused more on the virtues that would make a good nurse, rather than looking at what conduct is necessary to respect the person in the nurse’s care. However, recently, the ethics of nursing has also shifted more towards the nurse’s obligation to respect the human rights of the patient and this is reflected in a number of professional codes for nurses.[2] For example, this is made explicit in the latest code from the International Council of Nurses.[3] —————

Distinctive nature

Although much of nursing ethics can appear similar to medical ethics, there are some factors that differentiate it. Generally, the focus of nursing ethics is more on developing a caring relationship than concerns about broader principles, such as beneficence and justice. [4] For example, a concern to promote beneficence may be expressed in traditional medical ethics by the exercise of paternalism, where the health professional makes a decision based upon a perspective of acting in the patient’s best interests. However, it is argued by some that this approach acts against important values found in nursing ethics.[5] Nursing theory seeks a collaborative relationship with the person in care.

Brier-Mackie[6]suggests that nurses’ focus on care and nurture rather than cure of illness results in a distinctive ethics. Also, themes that emphasize respect for the dignity of the patient by promoting choice and control over

their environment are commonly seen. The distinction can be examined from different theoretical angles. Despite the move toward more deontological themes by some, there continues to be an interest in virtue ethics[7]in nursing ethics and some support for an ethic of care.[4] This is considered by its advocates to emphasise relationships over abstract principles and therefore to reflect the caring relationship in nursing more accurately than other ethical views. —————

Some themes in nursing ethics

Nurses seek to defend the dignity of those in their care.[8] In terms of standard ethical theory, this is aligned with having a respect for people and their autonomous choices. People are then enabled to make decisions about their own treatment. Amongst other things this grounds the practice of informed consent that should be respected by the nurse.[5] Although much of the debate lies in the discussion of cases where people are unable to make choices about their own treatment due to being incapacitated or having a mental illness that affects their judgement. A way to maintain autonomy is for the person to write an advance directive, outlining how they wish to be treated in the event of them not being able to make an informed choice, thus avoiding unwarranted paternalism. Another theme is confidentiality and this is an important principle in many nursing ethical codes. This is where information about the person is only shared with others after permission of the person, unless it is felt that the information must be shared to comply with a higher duty such as preserving life.[5].

Also related to information giving is the debate relating to truth telling in interactions with the person in care. There is a balance between people having the information required to make an autonomous decision and, on the other hand, not being unnecessarily distressed by the truth. Generally the balance is in favour of truth telling due to respect for autonomy, but sometimes people will ask not to be told, or may lack the capacity to understand the implications.[9] By observing the principles above, the nurse can act in a way that respects the dignity of the individual in their care, although this key outcome in nursing practice is sometimes challenged by resource, policy or environmental constraints in the practice area.[8] ———

Explain the significance of the Code in guiding and empowering nurses in their practice and workplace (e. g., clinical practice, education, research, administration). 6. Relate the 2001 Code of Ethics for Nurses to their own nursing practice within and without the community of nursing and to the practice of nursing within their workplace.

History

The ethics of professional nursing center on the care of the patient. The nurse, in ethical practice, develops a relationship with the patient. This practice complements the ethics and subsequent actions of the physicians, whose ethics focus on the treatment of the illness or condition of the patient, according to Joyce and Henry Thompson in “ Professional Ethics in Nursing.” Because the nurse works with the health-care team, headed by the physician, as well as the patient, nursing ethics must contain a dynamic element.

Read more: Professional Nursing Ethics | eHow. com http://www.ehow.com/about_6497496_professional-nursing-ethics.html#ixzz29yibXUPs * The American Nurses Association (ANA), along with many other health-care organizations, accepts the “Nightingale Pledge” as the foundation for modern professional nursing ethics. Lystra E. Gretter, along with a Committee for the Farrand Training School for Nurses, composed the pledge in 1893 in honor of the nursing pioneer Florence Nightingale (1820-1910). Gretter based the pledge loosely on the “Hippocratic Oath,” taken by physicians. Nursing schools readily adopted the pledge, and students entering the field of professional nursing recited it. The pledge contains four promises pertaining to various aspects of the nurse’s life: to live a pure life and practice faithfully, not to administer harmful drugs,