

# Principles of autonomy

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



Principle of Autonomy Principle of Autonomy Bioethics is the backbone of modern day nursing practice. One of the most important principles is autonomy. The principle of autonomy puts it that the patients can decide for themselves on anything regarding their health (Masters, 2014). The principle asserts that patients have the decisions on which way to follow as far as nursing is concerned. The practitioners state the alternatives for the patients to choose the best course of action.

The principle of autonomy is based on the rationality of decisions. Patients are expected to make rational decisions that increase their chances of regaining health. In this regard, autonomy does not license patients to make any detrimental decisions that would hurt them, the family or the society. The idea of autonomy is banked upon the fact that people have different views regarding their health, religion, and cultural issues. In this regard, the principle expects that autonomous decisions maximize the welfare of the patients.

It is worth noting that patients are supported by family members and other people in the community. As a result, they expect positive health outcomes. It is unethical to betray the expectation of other people by making unwise decisions. Family members are particularly concerned about the progress of their patient and hence it would be unfair to them, both emotionally and financially, to make decisions that harm their health. The harmful acts may also require additional treatment and care; a fact that would add on to the cost of healthcare and reduce the recovery time. Thus, patients must consider the impact of their autonomous decisions on others before taking action.

## Reference

Masters, K. (2014). Role development in professional nursing practice.  
Sudbury, Mass: Jones and Bartlett.