

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER 2007-2008

TITLE : ETHICAL ISSUES, DILEMMAS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE IN  
MENTAL HEALTH NURSING

COURSE : NUR 451

DURATION : TWO (2) HOURS

MARKS : 75

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- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS
  2. EACH QUESTION CARRIES 25 MARKS

**Question 1**

Nurse D is a newly employed community mental health nurse assigned to work in Ward 2 of the Psychiatric Centre. In order to be able to know the patients, she takes the patient charts to help identify them. At the end of this exercise Nurse D realizes that one patient was left out because her chart was not there. Nurse D checks all over for the chart but cannot locate it. Nurse D therefore is not able to know what the patient's condition was like on admission and what medications the patient is receiving even though the patient tells Nurse D that other nurses do give her "tablets" twice a day which, she complains, make her drowsy.

- a) What ethical and legal issues are inherent in this scenario? (20)
- b) What importance do patient records have in the care of patients? (5)

TOTAL: 25

**Question 2**

Multiple Choice questions. Choose the correct answer and indicate your response by writing the letter preceding the correct answer next to the appropriate question number e.g. 70=f. (1 point each)

1. Which of the following refers to the ability to form an opinion or draw sound conclusions?
  - a) Competence
  - b) Judgement
  - c) Responsibility
  - d) Morals
  
2. What steps should a nurse take to ensure research decisions follow ethical nursing practice/
  - a) Identify nurses to participate in the research committee
  - b) Communicate research study plans with clients
  - c) Access funding sources to support research initiatives
  - d) Review ethics practice standards
  
3. Assisted suicide, abortion and euthanasia are examples of
  - a) Code of ethics
  - b) Ethical issues
  - c) Autonomy
  - d) Fidelity
  
4. Which of the following describes the ethical principle of non-maleficence?
  - a) The right of the competent patient to choose a personal plan of life and action
  - b) The obligation of the health care provider to help people in need
  - c) The duty of the health care provider to do no harm
  - d) The responsibility of the health care provider to treat all in the same fair manner

5. The strongest motivating ethical principle in the provision of nursing care is
  - a) Autonomy
  - b) Utility
  - c) Beneficence
  - d) Non-maleficence
  
6. When assessing if a procedural risk to mother or foetus is justified, the ethical principle underlying the dilemma is
  - a) Non-maleficence
  - b) Informed consent
  - c) Self determination
  - d) Respect for individuals
  
7. The first step when using an ethical decision-making model in patient care is
  - a) identifying possible actions
  - b) determining the nature of the problem
  - c) Exploring patient wishes
  - d) Calculating potential outcomes
  
8. Micro-allocation of resources is an ethical concept that is concerned with the
  - a) Family
  - b) Individual
  - c) Society
  - d) Hospital
  
9. Which of the following describes the ethical principle of beneficence?
  - a) The right of the competent patient to choose a personal plan of life and action
  - b) The obligation of the health care provider to help people in need
  - c) The duty of the health care provider to do no harm
  - d) The responsibility of the health care provider to treat all in the same fair manner
  
10. In psychiatry, the treatment method that controls behaviour by changing emotions and suppressing one's personality is
  - a) Electro-convulsive therapy
  - b) Psychosurgery
  - c) Psychotherapy
  - d) Psychopharmacology
  
11. Which of the following describes the ethical theory of utilitarianism?
  - a) The health care provider must be truthful and avoid deception
  - b) The health care provider has an obligation to be faithful to commitments made to self and others
  - c) The responsibility of the health care provider to treat all people in the same fair manner
  - d) Health care resources are allocated so that the best is done for the greatest number of people

12. From the deontologic point of view, parental decision to withhold neonatal intensive care to their very low-birth weight infant would violate the principle of
- Utility
  - Autonomy
  - Justice
  - Macro-allocation
13. Parents of a foetus with multiple anomalies decide to have an abortion because “our child would have no quality of life and would impact negatively on what we could do for our other children”. The parents’ decision reflects the ethical concept of
- Utilitarianism
  - Deontology
  - Christian ethics
  - Egotism
14. In ethics, the phenomenon known as the “slippery slope” means that
- Adherence to ethical principles can gradually erode
  - Rules change depending on the patient’s socio-economic status
  - Moral values “sli and slide” because they are dynamic rather than static
  - The decision-making continuum begins with partenalism and ends with autonomy
15. The Swaziland Code of Conduct for Professional nurses directs nurses to provide patient care that is
- Curative
  - Autonomous
  - Utilitarian
  - Non-judgemental
16. An issue that causes the greatest ethical dilemma and moral argument is
- Adoption
  - Abortion
  - Surrogacy
  - Artificial insemination
17. When information is presented so that the patient can make an informed decision, the health care provider’s teaching is based on the principle of
- Justice
  - Respect
  - Veracity
  - Non-maleficence

18. The major conceptual foundation of deontology, a system of ethical thought, is that people have a specific duty to
- Consider the consequences of decisions in relation to others
  - Maximize good and minimize harm within society
  - Do what is right for the individual
  - Bend rules when it will help the patient
19. An individual is reflecting ethical thoughts from the school of Utilism when making the statement
- “Does the decision adhere to the rules of right and wrong?”
  - “The sanctity of life takes precedence over the quality of life”
  - “What is good or right must triumph over what is bad or wrong”
  - “Will the consequences of this decision cause a burden to society”
20. When assisting patients to make decisions that involve ethical dilemmas, nurses must first
- Refrain from imposing their own values on patients
  - Clarify their own values in relation to the moral issues
  - Understand ethical theories and principles before making decisions
  - Elicit the thoughts and feelings of the patient and significant others
21. Sipho is taken to the emergency room by the police. He is very demanding and pacing the floor. The ER nurse says to Sipho “If you do not calm down, and be quiet, I am going to put you in restraints”. This type of treatment could implicate the nurse for which of the following?
- Battery
  - Assault
  - Defamation of character
  - False imprisonment
22. Siphon becomes assaultive in the ER. The doctor orders a *STAT* injection of chlorpromazine to calm Siphon down. Siphon shouts, “Get away from me with that needle. I will sue you.” Under which of the following conditions are the staff protected from legal action?
- Siphon is considered “gravely disabled” and in need of help
  - This is an emergency situation and Siphon is a danger to self and others
  - This type of situation is covered by civil law
  - This type of situation is covered by common law
23. The nurse states, “I know Siphon does not want to be put into restraints but we must do so for the protection of staff and other clients”. This is an example of which ethical philosophy?
- Utilism
  - Egoism
  - Deontology
  - Kantianism

24. Which of the following described the ethical duty of veracity?
- a) The duty of the health care provider to do and promote good
  - b) The duty of the health care provider to do no harm
  - c) The duty of the health care provider to be faithful to commitments made to self and others
  - d) The duty of the health care provider to be truthful and avoid deception
25. The treatment modality that is considered dehumanizing because it works by making the patient adopt someone else's values and beliefs is
- a) Psychosurgery
  - b) Psychopharmacology
  - c) Psychotherapy
  - d) Coercion

TOTAL: 25

**Question 3**

- a) What purpose does knowledge of ethical theories and ethical principles serve? (7)
- b) What issues (ethical and professional) and dilemmas are inherent when nurses engage in a strike because of labour disputes with their employer. (18)

TOTAL :25