

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

**FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER DECEMBER 2013**

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

**COURSE : NUR 451**

**DURATION : TWO (2) HOURS**

**MARKS : 75**

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

**THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE INVIGILATOR**

**Question 1**

Muntu a 25-year-old unmarried staunch Christian, is admitted to the medical ward with severe abdominal pain, normal temperature, pallor, profuse sweating and hypotension. She is also having blood loss per vagina. She is accompanied by her best lady friend, also a staunch Christian. They have been friends since childhood. The doctor examined Muntu with a student nurse and Muntu's female friend present. Neither the nurse nor the doctor had asked the patient if it was alright to have her friend and student nurse present during her examination and history taking. Muntu was diagnosed with ectopic pregnancy. The nursing staff was told to prepare her for theatre. Muntu's parents arrived in the hospital while she was in theatre, wanting to know what was going on with their daughter. When told by nurses and their daughter's friend that Muntu was in theatre having an operation for an ectopic pregnancy, her father walked out of the ward but her mother collapsed on the floor weeping saying Muntu had disgraced the family.

What are the issues here?

(25)

**TOTAL = 25**

**Question 2. Objective questions**

**2A. Matching.** Match the words in column B with the correct meaning or response in column A, e.g. 56 = r, ( $\frac{1}{2}$  point each).

Column A	Column B
1. Manwele decides to go against family wishes and tell the client of his terminal status because that is what she would want if she were the client	a. Utilitarianism
2. Tiny decides to respect the family wishes and not tell the client of his terminal status because that would bring the most happiness to the most people	b. Deontology
3. Mumcy decides not to tell the client about his terminal status because it would be too uncomfortable for her to do so	c. Christian ethics
4. Thandeka decides to tell the client of his terminal status because her reasoning tells her that to do otherwise would be an evil act.	d. Natural-law theories
5. Carol decides to tell the client of his terminal status because she believes it is her duty to do so.	e. Ethical egoism
6. The nurse assists the physician with a procedure on a client who has refused to give consent	f. Breach of confidentiality
7. When the newspaper calls to inquire why a minister has been admitted to the hospital, the nurse replies, "he's here because he is an alcoholic".	g. Defamation of character
8. A competent, voluntary client has stated he wants to leave the hospital. The nurse hides his clothes in an effort to keep him from leaving.	h. Assault
9. Jack recently lost his wife and is very depressed. He is running for re-election to the Senate and asks the staff to keep his hospitalisation confidential. The nurse is excited about having a senator on the unit and tells her boyfriend about the admission, which soon becomes common knowledge. Jack loses the election.	i. Battery
10. Mike is very restless and is pacing a lot. The nurse says to Mike, "If you don't sit down in the chair and be still, I'm going to put you in restraints!"	j. False imprisonment

(5)

**2B. Multiple Choice.** Select the response that best answers each of the following questions (1 mark each).

1. Which of the following describes the ethical principle of beneficence?
  - A. The right of the competent person 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 health care provider to do no harm
  - D. The responsibility of the healthcare provider to treat all in the same fair manner
  
2. Which of the following describes the ethical principle of utilitarianism?
  - A. Health care resources are allocated so that the best is done for the greatest number of people.
  - B. The health care provider must be truthful and avoid deception.
  - C. The health care provider has an obligation to be faithful to commitments made to self and others.
  - D. The responsibility of the health care provider is to treat all people in the same fair manner
  
3. Ethical principles provide the user with
  - A. Guidelines
  - B. Absolutes
  - C. Suggestions
  - D. Laws
  
4. The word most closely associated with the ethic of caring is
  - A. Veracity
  - B. Empathy
  - C. Dilemma
  - D. Negotiation
  
5. To best help parents confronted with a perinatal moral dilemma, the nurse must approach the situation with
  - A. A good judgement
  - B. Unwavering values
  - C. A personal moral philosophy
  - D. A decision-making framework
  
6. When assessing whether a procedural risk to a mother or foetus is justified, the ethical principle underlying the dilemma is
  - A. Nonmaleficence
  - B. Informed consent
  - C. Self-determination
  - D. Respect for the foetus

7. An ethical dilemma unique to perinatal nursing is the
  - A. Risk of maleficence
  - B. Intensive use of technology
  - C. Innate conflict between maternal and foetal rights
  - D. Shrinking of health care resources
  
8. Informed consent refers to
  - A. Principle of autonomy
  - B. Voluntary but uninformed decision-making
  - C. Permission to participate in research
  - D. A voluntary decision to undergo a medical procedure, by a competent individual, who has received and understood the necessary information.
  
9. Informed consent is important because
  - A. It enables participants to understand vital information on proposed methods of treatment.
  - B. It provides participants with all information regarding remote risks
  - C. It enables the investigator to recruit research participants of his/her choice
  - D. It promotes clinical research
  
10. Who gives consent in cases of minors who have no parents or guardians?
  - A. Consent can be waived, it is not necessary
  - B. Nobody
  - C. A social worker
  - D. A legal guardian
  
11. The condition of limited access to a person is
  - A. Confidentiality
  - B. Secrecy
  - C. Security
  - D. Privacy
  
12. Ethical nursing care will not include
  - A. Respecting sanctity and quality of life
  - B. Ensuring privacy
  - C. Facilitating unfairness in the allocation of resources
  - D. Respecting truthfulness
  
13. Informed consent may be given by whom
  - A. A 21-year old after 3 glasses of wine and a 6 pack of beer
  - B. A 13-year old for the circumcision of her newborn son
  - C. A 54-year old mentally challenged resident
  - D. A nurse taking care of a client in an emergency

14. Non-maleficence requires the nurse to
  - A. Tell the truth
  - B. Provide positive actions to help others
  - C. First do no harm
  - D. Answer for one's actions.
  
15. A student nurse mistakenly gives aminophylline instead of acetaminophen. The student nurse
  - A. Is held to the same standard and legal limits as a registered nurse
  - B. Fills out an incident report and never administers medication again
  - C. Notifies the supervising physician and cries, begs and pleads for another chance
  - D. Should not have administered medications till graduation
  
16. According to the Code of Professional Nursing Conduct for Swaziland, the protection of a patient's rights and safety
  - A. Allows the nurse to refuse to participate in morally questionable research projects
  - B. Prohibits intervening, through established protocols, in the impaired practice of other care givers
  - C. Permits breaking of confidentiality, if the nurse finds a patient's behaviours personally offensive
  - D. Is not the responsibility of nurse administrators
  
17. A patient receiving palliative care for metastatic cancer of the breast begins asking for increased dosages of morphine for her pain, beyond what the physician has ordered. The nurse is wary of over medicating for fear of hastening the patient's death. The nurse should
  - A. Accept the patient's report of pain and give dosages to the maximum allowed by the order
  - B. Try to convince the patient to hold back on morphine in order to preserve her decision-making skills and hence her autonomy
  - C. Give the maximum amount of morphine ordered and call the physician to increase the dose to minimize the patient's pain and help hasten her death
  - D. Give the maximum amount of morphine ordered and call the physician to increase the dose in order to achieve the patient's comfort
  
18. The Code of Ethics does not include which of the following
  - A. Respect for persons regardless of health problems or economic status
  - B. Respect only for those receiving nursing care
  - C. Support for patients' rights to self-determination
  - D. Supportive care for those in the dying process
  
19. All of the following are strengths of utilitarianism except
  - A. Outlines methods for decision-making
  - B. Unbiased
  - C. Preserves individuality
  - D. Focuses on society

20. A nurse-midwife has been through lectures for assisted forceps delivery but has not had a patient for forceps delivery since the lectures. The delivery ward is understaffed on that day and a patient requiring forceps delivery presents. The nurse is uncomfortable with her knowledge base but has the forceps delivery orientation book with her. According to the Code of Practice, which of the following actions should the nurse take in this scenario?

- A. Recognize her knowledge-base deficit and so should make management aware and refuse to do the procedure
- B. Make management aware of her concerns and should not take the assignment unless an experienced midwife on forceps delivery is available to work with her until she feels she can provide safe care
- C. Since she knows that the ward is understaffed, she should take the assignment despite her concerns
- D. As long as she has the forceps delivery book guide with her, she should perform the procedure

(20)

**Total = 25**

### Question 3

Case: Zwelakhe, a 25-year old banker visits the VCT centre in Likhula where he consults nurse Nkosi for an HIV test. During the initial discussion Zwelakhe tells Nurse Nkosi that he is engaged to a 22 -year old nurse and they intend getting married in 6 months time. The HIV test results later show that Zwelakhe is HIV positive. At post-test counselling Nurse Nkosi asks Zwelakhe how he will deal with his HIV positive status in light of the imminent wedding to his fiancée. Zwelakhe tells Nurse Nkosi that he will not disclose his status because he does not want his wedding plans jeopardised.

- a) What is nurse Nkosi's obligation towards Zwelakhe? (10)
- b) Does Nurse Nkosi have any obligation towards Zwelakhe's fiancée? (15)

**Total = 25**