

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND**  
**FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES**

**FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER DECEMBER 2014**

**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**
  - 3. NO PAPER SHOULD BE BROUGHT INTO NOR OUT OF THE EXAMINATION ROOM**
  - 4. BEGIN EACH QUESTION ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER**

**DO NOT OPEN THIS QUESTION PAPER UNTIL PERMISSION IS GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR**

**Question 1: Multiple choice questions.**

Select the answer that best responds to each of the following questions e.g., 40 =s (1 point each).

1. Distributive justice refers to
  - a) Rewards allocated to those who shout loudest.
  - b) Rewards allocated regardless of contribution.
  - c) Rewards allocated by level of contribution.
  - d) Rewards allocated to those who cannot help themselves.
  
2. Clients receiving psychiatric care have a right to determine their own treatment plan. This right is based on the ethical principle of
  - a) Informed consent.
  - b) Beneficence.
  - c) Non-maleficence.
  - d) Autonomy.
  
3. Which of the following is not an ethical principle used in ethical decision-making?
  - a) Beneficence.
  - b) Justice.
  - c) Non-maleficence.
  - d) Deontology.
  
4. The ethical principle of non-maleficence says that:
  - a) You must act to benefit your patient.
  - b) You should promote patient autonomy.
  - c) You should not hurt your patient.
  - d) You should promote justice for patients.
  
5. Which of the following states the fundamental principle of distributive justice?
  - a) From each according to their ability.
  - b) To each according to their needs.
  - c) Individuals similar in all respects relevant to the kind of treatment in question should be treated similarly.
  - d) A and B.
  
6. Which of the following is true under the Utilitarian approach to moral evaluation?
  - a) The course of action with the best overall cost-benefit balance is morally best.
  - b) Actions whose costs outweigh their benefits are always immoral.
  - c) Actions whose benefits outweigh their costs are always moral.
  - d) Both B and C.
  
7. The standards we use to determine right from wrong, or good from bad, in thought and behaviour are known as
  - a) Ethics.
  - b) Values.
  - c) Attitudes.
  - d) Beliefs.
  
8. Which of the following is a principle that frames ethics during communication?
  - a) Listeners in the communication process have ethical responsibilities.
  - b) Speakers in the communication process have ethical responsibilities.
  - c) All parties in the communication process have ethical responsibilities.

- d) Ethical speakers and listeners possess attitudes that do not pervade their character.
9. Utilitarianism suggests that it is ethical to make decisions based on
- a) Common decency.
  - b) What is best for most people.
  - c) Moral values.
  - d) What is best for an individual.
10. Which set does not represent vital elements of informed consent?
- a) Capacity to consent; voluntary decision to participate; adequate comprehension of provided information.
  - b) Ability to withdraw from a drug trial without reprisals; full comprehension of provided information; documentation of informed consent.
  - c) Full disclosure of relevant information; capacity to consent; voluntary decision to participate.
  - d) Adequate comprehension of provided information; capacity to consent; voluntary decision to withdraw from the drug trial at any stage.
11. A treatment approach criticized for being dehumanizing because when done it is irreversible and is often experimental is
- a) Psychosurgery.
  - b) Psychotherapy.
  - c) Psychopharmacology.
  - d) behaviour control.
12. When assisting patients to make decisions that involve ethical dilemmas, a nurse must first
- a) Refrain from imposing own values on patients.
  - b) Clarify own values in relation to the moral issues.
  - c) Understand ethical theories and principles before making decisions.
  - d) Elicit the thoughts and feelings of the patient and significant others.
13. A nurse who is people-centred and unimpressed by personal benefits and self-interest best describes the ethical theory of
- a) Utilitarianism.
  - b) Altruism.
  - c) Egoism.
  - d) Deontology.
14. A client you have been counseling tells you he is going to shoot his wife because of her infidelity. As his counsellor
- a) You respect his right to confidentiality and do not tell anyone.
  - b) You just encourage him not to shoot his wife.
  - c) You report to the police and hope he does not find out.
  - d) You tell him that in this instance you have to breach confidentiality and inform the police.

15. You receive a fax from another hospital asking your hospital to release information about a particular patient you attended to 6 months ago.
  - a) You fax them all information you can find dating back to that time.
  - b) You throw the fax into the garbage can.
  - c) You ask them to have the patient send you a release of information form.
  - d) You fax the hospital back telling them you cannot release the information.
  
16. 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.
  
17. An ethical dilemma unique to perinatal nursing is the
  - a) Risk of maleficence.
  - b) Innate conflict between maternal and foetal rights.
  - c) Intensive use of technology.
  - d) Shrinking of health care resources.
  
18. 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 pleas for another chance.
  - d) Should not have administered medications till graduation.
  
19. 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.
  
20. The execution of duties associated with the nurse's particular role is called
  - a) Accountability.
  - b) Responsibility.
  - c) Non-maleficence.
  - d) Veracity.

21. The personal conviction that something is absolutely right or wrong in all situations is called
- Values.
  - Morals.
  - Ethics.
  - Standards of practice.
22. The principle or standards that influence behavior and decision-making which are based on experience, religion, education and culture is called
- Values.
  - Morals.
  - Ethics.
  - Standards of practice.
23. Before nurse Xulu administered a client's medication, he assessed the client's needs for drugs, and followed the "rights" in drug preparation and administration. After Nurse Xulu had given the dose, he evaluated the client's response to the medication given. Nurse Xulu is promoting
- Accountability.
  - Autonomy.
  - Responsibility.
  - Veracity.
24. A client is advised by the doctor to undergo chemotherapy. An informed consent is not yet signed. The client requests information related to chemotherapy and the drugs that will be given to her. The nurse explains the side effects of the medications including the length of treatment and prognosis of the disease. The nurse answers all questions by the client honestly even though the client may choose not to undergo chemotherapy. The nurse in this situation is promoting
- Confidentiality
  - Fidelity
  - Veracity
  - Justice
25. The following is not true about ethical decision-making models
- They provide mechanisms to help one think through an ethical dilemma.
  - They are not formulas to ensure that the decision you take will be the right one.
  - They help clarify an ethical dilemma or issue.
  - The use of a model provides one best way to approach ethical decision-making.

## Question 2

Case: Sikhalo, a 15 year old boy, was admitted to hospital with a severe asthma attack. During his stay on another ward, blood samples were routinely taken and they identified Sikhalo was suffering with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia, a condition with good prospects of recovery if treated correctly. The hospital had clear guidelines for supporting patients and their parents/carers at each stage of the patient's illness which includes diagnosis. These guidelines were adhered to throughout Sikhalo's treatment and care. Sikhalo's parents were informed of the diagnosis and they were devastated. They requested

their son not be told about the diagnosis, as they did not want him to know, as they thought he would not be able to cope and they believed 'Allah' would decide his fate.

How would you, as a nurse, handle the case? (25)

**Total = 25**

**Question 3**

Why are ethics an integral part of nursing practice? Discuss. (25)

**Total = 25**