

Guido, *Legal and Ethical Issues in Nursing*, 6e Chapter 03

Question 1

Type: MCMA

Which statements would the nurse evaluate as correctly identifying difference between ethics and law?

Note: Credit will be given only if all correct choices and no incorrect choices are selected.

Standard Text: Select all that apply.

1. Ethics applies to conduct and actions, and the law applies to motive and attitude.
2. Ethics focuses on the individual whereas law focuses on society as a whole.
3. Ethics are externally determined.
4. Law relies heavily on judicial enforcement.
5. Ethics can change situationally, but laws are static and unchangeable.

Correct Answer: 2,4

Rationale 1: Both ethics and the law apply to conduct, actions, and motive. Attitude is more associated with ethics.

Rationale 2: Ethics, like values, is individualistic and is subject to philosophical, moral, and individual interpretations. The law focuses on rules and regulations that guide society in a formal and binding manner.

Rationale 3: Ethics describes conduct or principles that are internalized.

Rationale 4: The legal system, including the judicial branch, is founded on rules and regulations that guide society in a formal and binding manner.

Rationale 5: Ethical values are subject to philosophical, moral, and individual interpretations and may change as the person grows and develops. Laws are more formal, but can also be changed.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Analyzing

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Evaluation

Learning Outcome: 3.2 Distinguish law from ethics.

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Question 2

Type: MCSA

The nurse bases individual nursing practice upon commitment to quality patient care and understanding of the nursing role. Under which broad classification of ethical theory does this fall?

1. Applied theories
2. Utilitarian theories
3. Deontological theories
4. Teleological theories

Correct Answer: 3

Rationale 1: Applied ethics analyzes specific, controversial moral issues and is not a broad category of ethics that serves as a basis for daily decisions.

Rationale 2: Utilitarian theory states that what makes an action right or wrong is its utility, with useful actions bringing about the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Following utilitarian principles will not always support providing excellent nursing care to an individual.

Rationale 3: Deontological theories derive norms and rules from the duties human beings owe one another by virtue of commitments that are made and roles that are assumed. The nurse makes a commitment to excellence of patient care.

Rationale 4: Teleological theories derive norms or rules for conduct from the consequences of actions. Teleological principles do not support excellence in individual care.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.1 Compare and contrast the different ethical theories that underlie ethical nursing practice.

Question 3

Type: MCSA

The hospital ethics committee has decided to move to the relational ethics framework for decision making. What change should the committee members expect from this framework shift?

1. Decisions made will be more practical and action oriented.

2. The number of options for discussion will be reduced.
3. Use of other ethical theories and guidelines will be eliminated.
4. The impact of the environment on the decision will be reduced.

Correct Answer: 1

Rationale 1: Relational ethics moves decisions into the context of the environment in which these decisions are made, creating more "practical action-oriented" ethics.

Rationale 2: Relational ethics is not meant to reduce the amount of options discussed.

Rationale 3: Relational ethics is not meant to eliminate other ethical theories and guidelines.

Rationale 4: Relational ethics moves decision making into the context of the environment in which the decisions are made.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Analyzing

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.1 Compare and contrast the different ethical theories that underlie ethical nursing practice.

Question 4

Type: MCSA

The nurse advises a patient to have surgery because, "The doctor knows what is best for you." The nurse is most likely following which ethical principle?

1. Respect for others
2. Paternalism
3. Justice
4. Fidelity

Correct Answer: 2

Rationale 1: Respect for others acknowledges the right of individuals to make decisions and to live or die based on those decisions.

Rationale 2: Paternalism is allowing someone else to make a decision for another and allows no collaboration in the decision-making process. In this scenario the nurse is encouraging the patient to let someone else (the physician) make treatment decisions.

Rationale 3: Justice states that people should be treated fairly and equally. Nothing in this scenario demonstrates use of justice.

Rationale 4: Fidelity is keeping one's promises or commitments. Nothing in this scenario demonstrates fidelity.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Implementation

Learning Outcome: 3.3 Define and apply to nursing practice the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, veracity, fidelity, justice, paternalism, and respect for others.

Question 5

Type: MCSA

A group of nurses wishes to improve the ethics of the care their group provides. What is the first step this group should take to reach their goal?

1. Request that all dilemmas be presented to the Hospital Ethics Committee for resolution.
2. Explore their individual values and beliefs.
3. Seek others' input rather than relying on their own ethical determinations.
4. Explore the values and beliefs of the physicians with whom they work.

Correct Answer: 2

Rationale 1: While the opinion of others and seeking support by hospital ethics committees to aid in the resolution of ethical dilemma can be helpful, it is not the first logical step in these nurses' work.

Rationale 2: Understanding one's ethics and values is the first step in understanding the ethics and values of others and in assuring the delivery of appropriate and ethical nursing care.

Rationale 3: A relying primarily on the ethical determinations of others is not a means to promote the ethics for a group of health care providers.

Rationale 4: At some point the nurses will need to consider the ethics and values of those with whom they work. This is not the first logical step in the process being undertaken.

Global Rationale:

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Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.3 Define and apply to nursing practice the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, veracity, fidelity, justice, paternalism, and respect for others.

Question 6

Type: MCSA

Prior to surgery, the nurse checks to ensure that the patient has signed an informed consent form. Which ethical principle is the nurse supporting?

1. Beneficence
2. Veracity
3. Autonomy
4. Fidelity

Correct Answer: 3

Rationale 1: Beneficence states that the actions one takes should promote good.

Rationale 2: Veracity concerns truth telling.

Rationale 3: Autonomy is the right to choose what will happen to one's own person. Being informed about the benefits and risks of surgery through informed consent is a direct reflection of the principle of autonomy.

Rationale 4: Fidelity is keeping one's promises or commitments.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Implementation

Learning Outcome: 3.3 Define and apply to nursing practice the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, veracity, fidelity, justice, paternalism, and respect for others.

Question 7

Type: MCSA

The nurse tells a patient that an immunization "will not hurt at all" when the nurse is aware that the injection will be painful. Which ethical principle has the nurse most clearly violated?

1. Veracity
2. Beneficence
3. Justice
4. Autonomy

Correct Answer: 1

Rationale 1: Veracity concerns truth telling. This nurse knowingly was not truthful with this patient, thereby violating the ethical principle of veracity.

Rationale 2: Beneficence states that the actions one takes should promote good.

Rationale 3: Justice states that people should be treated fairly and equally.

Rationale 4: Autonomy addresses personal freedom and self-determination.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Implementation

Learning Outcome: 3.3 Define and apply to nursing practice the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, veracity, fidelity, justice, paternalism, and respect for others.

Question 8

Type: MCSA

The nurse makes practice decisions based upon each patient's unique characteristics, the relationship between the patient and the nurse, and the most humanistic course of action in the particular case circumstance. Which branch of ethics does this reflect?

1. Virtual ethics
2. Duty ethics
3. Utilitarian ethics
4. Situational ethics

Correct Answer: 4

Rationale 1: Virtual ethics emphasizes development of good character and habitually performing in this quality character mode.

Rationale 2: Duty ethics derive norms and rules from the duties human beings owe one another by virtue of commitments that are made and roles that are assumed.

Rationale 3: Utilitarian ethics declares that what makes an action right or wrong is its utility, with useful actions bringing about the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Rationale 4: Situational ethics takes into account the unique characteristics of each individual, the caring relationship between the person and the caregiver, and the most humanistic course of action given the circumstances.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.1 Compare and contrast the different ethical theories that underlie ethical nursing practice.

Question 9

Type: MCMA

A patient is prescribed medication for the treatment of cancer. The nurse is concerned that administering this medication may have a harmful effect on the patient. Which conditions would help the nurse decide that it is ethical to administer the medication through the application of the concept of double effect?

Note: Credit will be given only if all correct choices and no incorrect choices are selected.

Standard Text: Select all that apply.

1. The medication has been proven effective in the treatment of cancer.
2. The nurse is administering the medication to achieve treatment of the cancer.
3. The harmful effect must not occur in order for the medication to be successful in treating the cancer.
4. The benefits of using this medication are more likely to occur than are the undesired actions of the medication.
5. The patient must agree to accept the possibility of undesired effects of the medication.

Correct Answer: 1,2,3,4

Rationale 1: One of the conditions that must be present for the concept of double effect to be used is that the action itself must be “good” or at least morally indifferent.

Rationale 2: One of the conditions that must be present for the concept of double effect to be used is that the nurse must intend only the good effect of the action.

Rationale 3: In order for the concept of double effect to be useful the undesired effect must not be the means of attaining the good effect.

Rationale 4: A proportional or favorable balance between the desirable and the undesirable effects of the action must exist for the concept of double effect to be pertinent.

Rationale 5: While teaching about undesired effects is part of patient education and the patient retains the right to refuse the medication this is not a part of the concept of double effect.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Analyzing

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.3 Define and apply to nursing practice the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, veracity, fidelity, justice, paternalism, and respect for others.

Question 10

Type: MCSA

An ethical dilemma has arisen in regard to a patient who has been declared incompetent and who left no advance directive. Which model is likely to be of best use to the ethics committee reviewing the case?

1. Autonomy
2. Patient justice
3. Patient benefit
4. Social justice

Correct Answer: 3

Rationale 1: The autonomy model facilitates decision making for the competent patient.

Rationale 2: Patient justice is not a model used by ethics committees.

Rationale 3: The patient benefit model uses substituted judgment and facilitates decision making for the incompetent patient.

Rationale 4: The social justice model considers broad social issues and is accountable to the institution.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.4 Discuss the importance and role of hospital ethics committees and ethics grand rounds.

Question 11

Type: MCSA

The hospital is forming an ethics committee. Which concept should be central to that committee's function?

1. Most of the committee's work should involve short-term ethical issues.
2. The overriding concern of the committee should be protection of the hospital.
3. Members should be limited to medical staff.
4. The committee should act to provide guidelines for potential problems.

Correct Answer: 4

Rationale 1: Ethical dilemmas can be both short-term and long-term. There is no restriction on ethics committees to focus primarily on short-term issues.

Rationale 2: Protection of the hospital should not be the ethics committee's primary concern. This committee is concerned about the provision of ethical care to the patient.

Rationale 3: Ethics committees should be broad based, including members from a variety of professions and services.

Rationale 4: Ethics committees can (1) provide structure and guidelines for potential problems, (2) serve as an open forum for discussion, and (3) function as a true patient advocate by placing the patient at the core of the committee discussions.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Planning

Learning Outcome: 3.4 Discuss the importance and role of hospital ethics committees and ethics grand rounds.

Question 12

Type: MCMA

The hospital has a well-designed, fully functioning ethics committee. What ethical debate topics, concerning the entire social network rather than an individual patient, might now be addressed by this committee?

Note: Credit will be given only if all correct choices and no incorrect choices are selected.

Standard Text: Select all that apply.

1. Do-not-resuscitate orders
2. Autonomy
3. Duplication of services
4. Informed consent
5. Effects of managed care on patient well-being

Correct Answer: 3,5

Rationale 1: A do-not-resuscitate order is an issue focused on an individual patient or health care organization.

Rationale 2: Autonomy is a broad-based ethical theory that the committee would use to guide decision making. It is not a specific topic of discussion.

Rationale 3: Duplication of services is a topic that concerns the entire social network of provision of health care and is a much broader topic than the typical individual concerns addressed by maturing committees.

Rationale 4: Informed consent is an ethical concern directed at the individual health care organization and is not a broad based issue that affects larger populations.

Rationale 5: The impact of managed care on patient well-being is the kind of broad-based, societal issue that can be addressed by a well-developed mature ethics committee.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Analyzing

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Implementation

Learning Outcome: 3.4 Discuss the importance of hospital ethics committees and ethics grand rounds.

Question 13

Type: MCMA

Which nursing actions would exemplify cardinal virtues as seen by Plato and other virtue ethicists?

Note: Credit will be given only if all correct choices and no incorrect choices are selected.

Standard Text: Select all that apply.

1. The nurse has developed the reputation of making wise decisions.
2. The nurse advocated for the patient's right to autonomy against a physician who is paternalistic.
3. When asked to work overtime shifts, the nurse always complies.
4. The nurse always puts the good of the unit before personal well-being.
5. The nurse treats all people working on the unit fairly and equally.

Correct Answer: 1,2,5

Rationale 1: Wisdom is a cardinal virtue as described by Plato and other virtue ethicists.

Rationale 2: This action took courage on the part of the nurse which is one of the cardinal virtues as described by Plato and other virtue ethicists.

Rationale 3: This is an example of fortitude, but is not always wise, so a cardinal virtue is not demonstrated.

Rationale 4: This is an example of generosity, but is not always wise nor does it evidence self-respect. This is not an example of a cardinal virtue.

Rationale 5: This is an example of justice which is a cardinal virtue as described by Plato and other virtue ethicists.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Analyzing

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Evaluation

Learning Outcome: 3.1 Compare and contrast the different ethical theories that underlie ethical nursing practice.

Question 14

Type: MCMA

A nurse is frequently tardy to work causing other nurses to have to change their plans to cover the unit. The nurse never thanks those who cover for her and often criticizes the work they did in her absence. If another nurse is tardy, she refuses to stay over to cover. Which ethical theories is this nurse violating?

Note: Credit will be given only if all correct choices and no incorrect choices are selected.

Standard Text: Select all that apply.

1. Fidelity
2. Autonomy
3. Beneficence
4. Veracity
5. Paternalism

Correct Answer: 1,3

Rationale 1: The nurse makes a promise to work when scheduled unless extenuating circumstances are present. Fidelity is the duty to keep promises.

Rationale 2: Nothing in this scenario indicates the nurse is violating the ethical principle of autonomy.

Rationale 3: Beneficence is the basic obligation to assist others. By refusing to work over to cover for a tardy co-worker, even though co-workers often do so for her, this nurse is not working to promote good and is not assuming the obligation to help others.

Rationale 4: Veracity concerns telling the truth. There is nothing in the scenario that indicates the nurse lies about the reasons why she is tardy.

Rationale 5: Paternalism involves completely making the final decisions for others. There is no evidence of paternalism in this scenario.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Analyzing

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Implementation

Learning Outcome: 3.3 Define and apply to nursing practice the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, veracity, fidelity, justice, paternalism, and respect for others.

Question 15

Type: MCSA

The hospital ethics committee has been asked to consider a controversial issue that has a significant number of persons both for and against it. Which other characteristic would the committee look for when determining if applied ethics should be used as a guide for their work?

1. The situation must concern a distinctly moral issue.
2. The situation must involve great expense to the hospital or patient.
3. The situation must involve high risk activities.
4. The situation must occur frequently.

Correct Answer: 1

Rationale 1: To be considered an applied ethical issue, two key characteristics are important. First the issue needs to be controversial with significant numbers of persons both for and against the issue. Second, the issue must concern a distinctly moral issue.

Rationale 2: Expense is not considered in determining if this is an applied ethical issue.

Rationale 3: There is no indication that high risk must be involved in determining whether an issue is an applied ethical issue.

Rationale 4: There is nothing to indicate that a situation must occur frequently in order for it to be considered an applied ethical issue.

Global Rationale:

Cognitive Level: Applying

Client Need: Safe Effective Care Environment

Client Need Sub: Management of Care

Nursing/Integrated Concepts: Nursing Process: Evaluation

Learning Outcome: 3.4 Discuss the importance and role of hospital ethics committees and ethics grand rounds.