

ETHICS IN MEDICAL PRACTICE



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DEFINITION



Moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity.

DEFINITION



Ethics seeks to resolve questions of human morality by defining concepts such as:

good and evil,

right and wrong,

virtue and vice,

justice and crime.

DEFINITION



Three major areas of study within ethics recognized today are:

- **Meta-ethics**, concerning the theoretical meaning and reference of moral propositions, and how their **truth values** (if any) can be determined
- **Normative ethics**, concerning the practical means of determining a moral course of action
- **Applied ethics**, concerning what a person is obligated (or permitted) to do in a specific situation or a particular domain of action

DEFINITION



‘The science of the ideal human character’

‘The science of moral duty’

“A set of concepts and principles that guide us in determining what behaviour helps or harms sentient creatures”.[[]

‘Morality’ ... and moral principles of a particular tradition, group or individual.’

‘Behaving in accordance with social conventions, religious beliefs and the law.’

DEFINITION



Aristotle said that

“a man should not simply live, but live well with conduct governed by moderate virtue.

Virtue denotes doing the right thing, to the right person, at the right time, to the right extent, in the right fashion, for the right reason.”

MEDICAL ETHICS



Medical ethics is a system of moral principles that apply values to the practice of clinical medicine and in scientific research.

These values include:

- **the respect for autonomy,**
- **non-maleficence,**
- **beneficence, and**
- **justice**

HISTORICAL FACTS



- The term medical ethics first dates back to 1803, when English author and physician [Thomas Percival](#) published a document describing the requirements and expectations of medical professionals.
- The Code of Ethics was then adapted in 1847, relying heavily on Percival's words.
- Over the years, revisions have been made to the original document.
- The practice of Medical Ethics is widely accepted and practiced throughout the world.

HISTORICAL FACTS



There are several other codes of conduct.

- **The Hippocratic Oath** fifth century BCE.
- **The Declaration of Helsinki** (1964)
- **The Nuremberg Code** (1947)
- ***Roe v. Wade*** (1973)
- **As this field continues to develop and change throughout history, the focus remains on fair, balanced, and moral thinking.**

MCI (PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT, ETIQUETTE AND ETHICS) REGULATIONS 2002



- **A physician shall uphold the dignity and honour of his profession.**
- **The prime object of the medical profession is to render service to humanity; reward or financial gain is a subordinate consideration.**
- **A physician should be an upright man,**
- **He shall keep himself pure in character and be diligent in caring for the sick;**
- **He should be modest, sober, patient, prompt in discharging his duty without anxiety; conducting himself with propriety in his profession and in all the actions of his life.**

MEMBERSHIP IN MEDICAL SOCIETY



- **For the advancement of his profession, a physician should affiliate with associations and societies of allopathic medical professions and involve actively in the functioning of such bodies.**
- **A Physician should participate in professional meetings as part of Continuing Medical Education programmes, for at least 30 hours every five years, organized by reputed professional academic bodies or any other authorized organisations.**

MEDICAL RECORDS



- **Every physician shall maintain the medical records pertaining to his / her indoor patients for a period of 3 years from the date of commencement of the treatment .**
- **If any request is made for medical records either by the patients / authorised attendant or legal authorities involved, the same may be duly acknowledged and documents shall be issued within the period of 72 hours.**
- **Efforts shall be made to computerize medical records for quick retrieval.**

MEDICAL CERTIFICATES



- **A Registered medical practitioner shall maintain a Register of Medical Certificates giving full details of certificates issued.**
- **When issuing a medical certificate he / she shall always enter the identification marks of the patient and keep a copy of the certificate.**
- **He / She shall not omit to record the signature and/or thumb mark, address and at least one identification mark of the patient on the medical certificates or report.**

REGISTRATION NUMBER



Every physician shall display the registration number accorded to him by the State Medical Council / Medical Council of India in his clinic and in all his prescriptions, certificates, money receipts given to his patients.

SUFFIX



- **Physicians shall display as suffix to their names only recognized medical degrees or such certificates/diplomas and memberships/honours which confer professional knowledge or recognizes any exemplary qualification/achievements.**

GENERIC NAMES OF DRUGS



- **Every physician should, as far as possible, prescribe drugs with generic names.**
- **He / she shall ensure that there is a rational prescription and use of drugs.**

QUALITY ASSURANCE



Highest Quality Assurance in patient care:

- **Every physician should aid in safeguarding the profession against admission to it of those who are deficient in moral character or education.**
- **Physician shall not employ in connection with his professional practice any attendant who is neither registered nor enlisted under the Medical Acts in force and shall not permit such persons to attend, treat or perform operations upon patients wherever professional discretion or skill is required.**

EXPOSURE OF UNETHICAL CONDUCT



A physician should expose, without fear or favour, incompetent or corrupt, dishonest or unethical conduct on the part of members of the profession.

PAYMENT



- **The physician, engaged in the practice of medicine shall give priority to the interests of patients. The personal financial interests of a physician should not conflict with the medical interests of patients.**
- **A physician should announce his fees before rendering service and not after the operation or treatment is under way.**
- **It is unethical to enter into a contract of "no cure no payment".**
- **Physician rendering service on behalf of the state shall refrain from anticipating or accepting any consideration.**

LAW ABIDING



The physician shall observe the laws of the country like:

- **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940;**
- **Pharmacy Act, 1948;**
- **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic substances Act, 1985;**
- **Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971;**
- **Transplantation of Human Organ Act, 1994;**
- **Mental Health Act, 1987;**
- **Environmental Protection Act, 1986;**
- **Pre-natal Sex Determination Test Act, 1994;**
- **Drugs and Magic Remedies (Objectionable Advertisement) Act, 1954;**
- **Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities and Full Participation) Act, 1995 and**
- **Bio-Medical Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 1998.**

PATIENCE, DELICACY AND SECRECY



- **Patience and delicacy should characterize the physician.**
- **Confidences concerning individual or domestic life entrusted by patients to a physician and defects in the disposition or character of patients observed during medical attendance should never be revealed unless their revelation is required by the laws of the State.**
- **Sometimes, however, a physician must determine whether his duty to society requires him to employ knowledge, obtained through confidence as a physician, to protect a healthy person against a communicable disease to which he is about to be exposed. In such instance, the physician should act as he would wish another to act toward one of his own family in like circumstances.**

PROGNOSIS



The physician should neither exaggerate nor minimize the gravity of a patient's condition. He should ensure himself that the patient, his relatives or his responsible friends have such knowledge of the patient's condition as will serve the best interests of the patient and the family.

EMERGENCY CARE



- **A physician is free to choose whom he will serve.**
- **He should, however, respond to any request for his assistance in an emergency.**
- **Once having undertaken a case, the physician should not neglect the patient, nor should he withdraw from the case without giving adequate notice to the patient and his family.**

CONSULTATION



- **Consultation should not be solicited unnecessarily.**
- **However in case of serious illness and in doubtful or difficult conditions, the physician should request consultation, but under any circumstances such consultation should be justifiable and in the interest of the patient only and not for any other consideration.**
- **Consulting pathologists /radiologists or asking for any other diagnostic Lab investigation should be done judiciously and not in a routine manner.**

ADVERTISING



- **Soliciting of patients directly or indirectly, by a physician, by a group of physicians or by institutions or organisations is unethical.**
- **A physician shall not give to any person any approval, recommendation, endorsement, certificate, report or statement with respect of any drug, medicine, or remedy.**
- **He should not boast of cases, operations, cures or remedies or permit the publication of report thereof through any mode.**
- **A medical practitioner is however permitted to make a formal announcement in press regarding the following:**
 - On starting practice, change of type of practice, changing address, temporary absence from duty. resumption of another practice, succeeding to another practice, Public declaration of charges.**
- **Printing of self photograph, or any such material of publicity in the letter head or on sign board of the consulting room or any such clinical establishment shall be regarded as acts of self advertisement and unethical conduct on the part of the physician.**

GIFT, GRATUITY OR COMMISSION



- **A physician shall not give, solicit, or receive nor shall he offer to give solicit or receive, any gift, gratuity, commission or bonus in consideration of or return for the referring, recommending or procuring of any patient for medical, surgical or other treatment.**
- **A physician shall not directly or indirectly, participate in or be a party to act of division, transference, assignment, subordination, rebating, splitting or refunding of any fee for medical, surgical or other treatment.**

PUNISHMENT



- **Once a complain is received by any of the councils, the same will be investigated.**
- **Delinquent physician will be given opportunity to present his case by himself or pleader.**
- **If found guilty, punishment will be given by temporary or permanent termination of the registration.**

THANK YOU

