Ethical Conduct
Do the right thing
Ethics

“The discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation; A theory or system of moral values; A consciousness of moral importance.”

(Merriam-Webster, 2019)
Code of Ethics for Nurses

❖ Purposes
❖ Provides succinct statements of ethical obligations and duties for nurses.
❖ The non-negotiable standard of the nursing profession.
❖ Expresses the nursing profession’s commitment to society for safe practice.

❖ 9 provisions with interpretive statements to guide nursing practice ethically

(ANA, 2015)
Provision 1

- “The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.”

(ANA, 2015, p.1)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 1)

♦ 1.1 Respect for Human Dignity
♦ 1.2 Relationships with Patients
♦ 1.3 The Nature of Health
♦ 1.4 The Right to Self-determination
♦ 1.5 Relationships with Colleagues and Others

(ANA, 2015, pp.1-4)
Provision 2

“"The nurse’s primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.”"

(ANA, 2015, p.5)
Interpretive Statements
(Provision 2)

- 2.1 Primacy of the Patient’s Interests
- 2.2 Conflict of Interest for Nurses
- 2.3 Collaboration
- 2.4 Professional Boundaries

(ANA, 2015, pp. 5-7)
Provision 3

“The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 9)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 3)

- 3.1 Protection of the Rights of Privacy and Confidentiality
- 3.2 Protection of Human Participants in Research
- 3.3 Performance Standards and Review Mechanisms
- 3.4 Professional Responsibility in Promoting a Culture of Safety
- 3.5 Protection of Patient Health and Safety by Acting on Questionable Practice
- 3.6 Patient protection and Impaired Practice

(ANA, 2015, pp. 9-13)
Provision 4

“The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 15)
Interpretive Statements
(Provision 4)

- 4.1 Authority, Accountability, and Responsibility
- 4.2 Accountability for Nursing Judgments, Decisions, and Actions
- 4.3 Responsibility for Nursing Judgments, Decisions, and Actions
- 4.4 Assignment and Delegation of Nursing Activities or Tasks

(ANA, 2015, pp. 15-17)
Provision 5

“The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 19)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 5)

♦ 5.1 Duties to Self and Others
♦ 5.2 Promotion of Personal Health, Safety, and Well-Being
♦ 5.3 Preservation of Wholeness of Character
♦ 5.4 Preservation of Integrity
♦ 5.5 Maintenance of Competence and Continuation of Professional growth
♦ 5.6 Continuation of Personal Growth

(ANA, 2015, pp. 19-22)
Provision 6

“The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 23)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 6)

- 6.1 The Environment and Moral Virtue
- 6.2 The Environment and Ethical Obligation
- 6.3 Responsibility for the Healthcare Environment

(ANA, 2015, pp. 23-25)
Provision 7

“The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 27)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 7)

♦ 7.1 Contributions through Research and Scholarly Inquiry

♦ 7.2 Contributions through Developing, Maintaining, and Implementing Professional practice Standards

♦ 7.3 Contributions through Nursing and Health Policy Development

(ANA, 2015, pp. 27-29)
Provision 8

“The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 31)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 8)

- 8.1 Health is a Universal Right
- 8.2 Collaboration for Health, Human Rights, and Health Diplomacy
- 8.3 Obligation to Advance Health and Human Rights and Reduce Disparities
- 8.4 Collaboration for Human Rights in Complex, Extreme, or Extraordinary Practice Settings

(ANA, 2015, pp. 31-33)
Provision 9

“The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.”

(ANA, 2015, p. 35)
Interpretive Statements (Provision 9)

- 9.1 Articulation and assertion of Values
- 9.2 Integrity of the Profession
- 9.3 Integrating Social Justice
- 9.4 Social Justice in Nursing and Health Policy

(ANA, 2015, pp. 35-37)
7 Ethical Principles

1. Justice ~ Fairness to all people
2. Beneficence ~ Do the right thing
3. Nonmaleficence ~ Do no harm (intent or unintent)
4. Accountability ~ Accept responsibility for your actions
5. Fidelity ~ Be true to your word (Keep your promises)
6. Autonomy ~ Self-determination of patient. Patient can have opinions about and make own decisions for care
7. Veracity ~ Tell the truth (Don’t withhold truth to patient)

(RN, 2019)
Informed Consent

♦ A discussion between a patient and physician which results in the patient giving authorization to have a specific medical intervention.

♦ If a patient is unable to give consent, an authorized surrogate may grant approval.

♦ Information included in the consent:
  ♦ Medical diagnosis
  ♦ The nature and reason of recommended interventions
  ♦ Risks and benefits of all options, including no treatment  

(AMA, 2019)
Nurses and Informed Consent

- Be sure the patient fully understands the medical intervention they are agreeing to have

- Obtaining consent is essential to patient centered care and patient safety

- Assess for barriers to understanding by patient:
  - Missing basic information
  - Lack of shared decision making between provider and patient
  - Lacking health literacy by patient
  - Deficient cultural sensitivity

(The Joint Commission, 2016)
Nurse as a Witness

- Witnessing the **signature** on the consent form is not the same as obtaining the consent.

- This is an administrative duty by the nurse only.

- It is done **after** the informed consent is obtained by physician.

- The signature means that the nurse **witnessed** the patient sign the form.

(The Joint Commission, 2016)
References


