

Understanding ethics and ethical decision making: case studies and discussions

By Vincent Icheku



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Understanding ethics and ethical decision making: cases and discussions is designed to guide nursing and social work students and practitioners through a wide range of ethical issues that they face in practice. The book serves as a guide to help students practice critical thinking skills and learn how to resolve many ethical dilemmas they may reasonably expect to face as a student and, later, as nursing or social work practitioners. It book provides background discussions on moral, values, ethical theories and fundamental concerns of modern ethics—autonomy, beneficence, non-malficence and justice. The discussions start with analysis of concepts, theories or principles and then use case study discussions to demonstrate their application to practice problems.

Peers Review and Endorsements:

"The book drew from the work of many scholars and designed a simple model to help students gain the knowledge of ethical analysis and decision making". Vidal Johnson, Senior Lecturer in Law and Ethics, London South Bank University "I was impressed by the way this author consistently addressed both social work and nursing ethical issues, highlighting the importance of ethics and application in nursing and social work practice". Michelle Evans, Senior lecturer in Learning Disability/Mental Health and Social Work, London South Bank University. "Most other published books on nursing and social work ethics are often laden with theories and principles. This book offers an excellent contribution to the understanding of the relationship between learning ethical theories and principles and their practice applications". Jude C. Ibe, Principal lecturer in Dept. of Family Care and Mental Health; University of Greenwich, London Organisation of the book

Through carefully constructed chapters, the book provides details on the essential aspects of ethical knowledge that students need to work through ethical problems and make sound decisions:

We begin in Chapter 1 by examining several relevant and important themes in contemporary nursing and social work practice. These themes are ethics and branches of ethics, morals, and values. This is to help readers learn or reinforce existing knowledge of the themes.

Chapter 2 explores the main reasons given for ethics in nursing and social work education. The themes discussed include the need to meet requirements of the law, develop knowledge required for dealing with ethical dilemmas, gain knowledge of how to handle conflict that may arise in relationship with other

professionals, and deal with cultural diversity of patient and client groups. The chapter will argue that ethical education is crucial to achieving the above goals. The focus of Chapter 3 is firmly on consideration of nursing and social work as moral practice and duties to act ethically. The themes covered include duty to protect vulnerable people, duty to act as patient's or client's advocate, duty to assess potential risks and empower those in care, the need to work within ethical standards and laws, and the duty to maintain confidentiality of information within professional boundaries.

Chapter 4 explores value of the three ethical theories that prescribe morally right actions. The chapter also examines some of the major criticisms of the individual theories and discusses how they differ from each other.

Chapter 5 explores the four ethical principles and how they inform nursing and social work practice. As conflicting principles often give rise to ethical dilemma, the chapter will discuss model for screening ethical principles and use case studies and discussions to illustrate how ethical dilemma could be resolved by identifying and applying the principle or legal obligation that take precedence over others.

Chapter 6 examines the common ethical issues and dilemmas nursing and social work professionals usually face in practice. The issues discussed include conflicting moral imperative, informed consent, best interest, and giving information and equitab

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