Topics for today:
- Values, morals, laws & ethics
- Key concepts in ethics
- Ethical systems
- Application of ethical theories

Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

Values:
- ideals or concepts that give meaning to an individual's life
- derived from societal norms, religion and family orientation
- serve as framework for making decisions & taking action in daily life
- change as life situations change, as person ages and when situations cause values conflicts
Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

Morals
- fundamental standards of right and wrong that an individual learns and internalizes, usually in early childhood
- based on religious beliefs, but society plays an important part in the development
- behavior is in accordance with a group norm, customs or traditions
- valued behaviors and beliefs

Laws:
- rules of social conduct made by humans to protect society
- based on fairness and justice
- to preserve the species & promote peaceful and productive interactions between individuals or groups by protecting rights
- enforceable by some type of police force
- applied equally to all persons

Ethics:
- declarations of what is right or wrong and of ‘what ought to be’
- usually presented as systems of value behaviors and beliefs
- serve the purpose of governing conduct to ensure the protection of an individual’s rights
- exist on several levels: individual or small group to entire society
- no enforcement for violation of ethics
Values, Morals, Laws & Ethics

**Code of Ethics:**
- written list of professional values and standards of conduct
- framework for decision making for profession

**Ethical Dilemma:**
- situation that requires an individual to make a choice between two equally unfavorable alternatives
- no simple right or wrong answer

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Key Concepts in Ethics

1. **Autonomy** - right to self determination, independence and freedom (e.g. make own decisions)
2. **Justice** - obligation to be fair to all people: race, marital status, medical diagnosis, social standing, religious belief, sexual preference, etc.
3. **Fidelity** - obligation of an individual to be faithful to commitments made to self and others. (Accountability)

4. **Beneficence** - primary goal of health care is ‘doing good’ for clients
5. **Nonmaleficence** - ‘do no harm’ to clients, intentionally or unintentionally
6. **Veracity** - principle of truthfulness. Healthcare worker must tell truth and not mislead intentionally
Key Concepts in Ethics

7. Standard of Best Interest - decision made about a client’s healthcare when they are unable to make the informed decision themselves (healthcare worker and family together)

DPOAHC - durable power of attorney for health care - legally designated person to make decisions for an individual

Key Concepts in Ethics

8. Obligations - demands made on an individual, a profession, a society or a government to fulfill and honor the rights of others

-legal: formal statements of law and are enforceable under the law

-moral: based on moral or ethical principles, but are not enforceable by law

Key Concepts in Ethics

9. Rights - something owed to an individual according to just claims, legal guarantees, or moral and ethical principles

-welfare: (aka legal) based on legal entitlements to some good or benefit

-ethical: (aka moral) based on moral or ethical principles

-option: based on fundamental belief in the dignity and freedom of humans
**Slide 13**

**Ethical Systems**

**Utilitarianism**
- called ‘teleology’ or situational ethics
- ethical system of utility
- defines good as happiness or pleasure
  - “doing the greatest good for the greatest number”
  - “the end justifies the means”

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**Slide 14**

**Ethical Systems**

**Deontology**
- based on moral rules and unchanging principles
- duty-based ethics - standards exist for the ethical choices and judgments are fixed and do not change when the situation changes
- useful in making ethical decisions in healthcare because it holds that an ethical judgment based on principles will be the same in a variety of similar situations regardless of time, location, or individuals involved

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**Slide 15**

**Application of Ethical Theories**

**Nursing Code of Ethics**
- the ethical principles that govern nursing, and offer guidance to the individual practitioner in making decisions
Ethical Decision-Making

Goal: to determine right and wrong in situations where clear demarcations are not readily apparent

* collect, analyze and interpret data
* state the dilemma
* consider the choices
* analyze the advantage & disadvantage of each course of action
* make the decision & act on it

See you next class……
Please do your readings & bring thoughtful questions!